DONNIE DARKO

by Richard Kelly

A troubled teenager is plagued by visions of a man in a large rabbit suit who manipulates him to commit a series of crimes, after he narrowly escapes a bizarre accident.

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FADE IN

We descend upon Carpathian Ridge, a crescent-shaped cliff that extrudes from the dense Virginia evergreens above a deep rock canyon. The cliff marks the end of a dirt road that winds down from above.
Donnie Darko (sixteen) is asleep at the edge of the cliff. With his bike collapsed next to him, he is shivering, curled up on the foetal position.
He slowly opens his eyes and looks around, disoriented by the morning light. He then stands up, looking down into the expansive rock canyon. After a moment of hesitation, he takes his bike back up the hill.

EXT. MIDDLESEX - MORNING (11 A.M.)

Montage is choreographed to "Never Tear Us Apart" by INXS.
Donnie pedals down into the suburban village of Middlesex, Virginia... passing by a large rock Middlesex rock-pattern.
Donnie pedals past two neighbourhood women who are speedwalking with handweights. They smile at him. A Pontiac Trans-Am speeds by.

EXT. NEIGHBOURHOOD STREET - DAY (SATURDAY 1 P.M.)

Donnie turns the corner and heads towards the garage.
We pan over to the Darko house... moving through the front yard where Eddie Darko (forty-four) pulls the cord and his gas-powered leaf-blower roars to life.
Elizabeth Darko (nineteen) comes out the front door. She approaches

her dad from behind. Eddie turns and aims the leaf-blower at her face... blasting her with air.

EXT. DARKO DRIVEWAY - NEXT

Donnie parks his bike and goes inside.

EXT. DARKO BACKYARD / PATIO - NEXT

We pull back from Samantha Darko (ten) as she is jumping on a trampoline and pan over to Rose Darko (forty-two) as she sits at a table reading a paperback copy of Stephen King's "IT". She glances over to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - NEXT

Donnie walks into the kitchen. He then goes to the refrigerator.
Printed in magic marker on the refrigerator notepad is the phrase: WHERE IS DONNIE?

INT. FAMILY ROOM - EVENING (5 P.M.)

The opening theme of "Who's the Boss?" begins as we see Tony Danza's blue van and the title card. We reveal Samantha, sitting on the floor,

singing softly to the theme song "Brand New Life" performed by Larry Weiss.
We pan over to Donnie, sitting in the La-Z Boy.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING (6 P.M.)

The Darko family has convened for dinner. They eat silently for several moments.

ELIZABETH

I'm voting for Dukakis.

EDDIE

Perhaps when you have children of your own that need braces, and you can't afford them because half of your husband's paycheck goes to the federal government, you'll regret that decision.

ELIZABETH

(amused bitterness)

I'm not gonna squeeze one out until I'm thirty.

DONNIE

Will you still be working at Yarn Barn? 'Cause that's a great place to raise children.

ROSE

No, a year of partying is enough. She'll be going to Harvard this fall.

ELIZABETH

I haven't been accepted yet, mother.

ROSE

(smiles)

If you think Michael Dukakis will provide for this country prior to the point when you decide to squeeze one out, then I think you're misinformed.

SAMANTHA

When can I squeeze one out?

DONNIE

(to his sister)

Not until like... eighth grade.

ROSE

(to Donnie)

Excuse me?

ELIZABETH

Donnie? You're a dick.

DONNIE

Whoa, Elizabeth. A little hostile, there. Maybe you should be the one in therapy. Then Mom and Dad can pay someone two hundred dollars an hour to listen to all of your thoughts... so we won't have to.

ELIZABETH

Maybe you'd like to tell Mom and Dad why you stopped taking your medication.

An awkward silence.

ROSE

(surprised)

You've stopped taking your medication?

SAMANTHA

When can I squeeze one out, Mom?

DONNIE

(glaring at Elizabeth)

You're such a fuck-ass.

ROSE

When did you stop taking your medication?

ELIZABETH

(laughing)

Did you just call me a fuck-ass?

ROSE

That's enough.

ELIZABETH

(to Donnie)

You can suck a fuck.

DONNIE

Oh, please tell me, Elizabeth, how exactly does one suck a fuck?

ROSE

(disgusted)

We will not have this kind of language at the dinner

table.

They are all silent for a moment.

SAMANTHA

What's a fuck-ass?

Despite his brave efforts to hold back laughter, Eddie Darko lets out a slight guffaw.

INT. ELIZABETH'S ROOM - EVENING (SATURDAY NIGHT, 9 P.M.)

Elizabeth talks on the phone, getting ready for her Saturday night. Rose knocks and then enters.

ELIZABETH

(into the phone)

No. I took a year off to be with you.

(beat)

Of course I care. Don't get angry.

(covering the phone)

What?

ROSE

How did you know?

ELIZABETH

(cutting her off)

I didn't realise it was such a big deal.

ROSE

It is a big deal.

ELIZABETH

I caught him flushing pills down the toilet. He knows you check the container.

INT. DONNIE'S ROOM - NEXT

Donnie lies on his bed, reading "Collected Short Stories" by Graham Greene. His room is an organised wreck.

Rose enters and begins to pick things up of the floor.

DONNIE

Get out of my room.

Rose bitterly turns to leave, but stops at the door.

ROSE

I wish I knew where you went at night.

(beat)

Did you toilet paper the Johnson's house?

DONNIE

(still reading)

I stopped rolling houses in the sixth grade, Mom.

(beat)

Get out of my room.

ROSE

You know... it would be nice to look at you some time... and see my son. I don't recognise this person today.

DONNIE

Then why don't you start taking the goddamn pills?

Donnie leans over and turns off his lamp. Rose turns and leaves her son alone in the dark, closing the door behind her.

DONNIE

Bitch.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NEXT

Rose stops in her tracks, hearing this. She then walks into her bedroom and closes the door.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NEXT

Rose goes into bed with Eddie, who is reading a hardback copy of Stephen King's "The Tommyknockers ".

ROSE

Our son just called me a bitch.

EDDIE

(beat)

You're not a bitch.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - NEXT

Donnie removes his pills from the medicine cabinet. We see insert that reads: L. THURMAN M.D.

He looks at the bottle for a moment, and then takes three pills and swallows them... staring at his reflection in the mirror.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT (12 A.M.) Eddie sits up in bed, unable to sleep.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NEXT

The TV pops on. Eddie drops into the La-Z Boy.
They are replaying a Bush/Dukakis debate. Eddie laughs.

INT. FOYER - NEXT

We pull back and pan over to a grandfather clock... as the hand reaches midnight.

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INT. DONNIE'S ROOM - NIGHT (EARLY SUNDAY MORNING, 1 A.M.)

VOICE

(whisper)

Wake... up... Donnie.

Donnie jerks upright in his bed, awakened from a bad dream. He looks over at his alarm clock: 12:50 a.m. His expression is distant... confused.

INT. FOYER - NEXT

Donnie walks downstairs.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NEXT

Donnie stares at Eddie, asleep in the La-Z Boy.

INT. KITCHEN - NEXT

Donnie walks into the kitchen, removes the magic marker from the refrigerator message board.

INT. FOYER - NEXT

Donnie walks to the front and exits the house.

EXT. DARKO HOUSE, FRONT YARD - NEXT

Donnie walks down the front walk to the street.

EXT. NEIGHBOURHOOD STREET - NEXT

Donnie walks down the street.

EXT. SEVENTH HOLE - NIGHT (1:30 A.M.)

Donnie arrives next to the pin and stares off into the distance.

VOICE

Helluva night for a walk... huh, Donnie?

Donnie stares off into the distance.

VOICE (CONT'D)
Tonight is very special, Donnie.

DONNIE
What?

VOICE
I've been watching you.
(beat)
Do you believe in God, Donnie?

Donnie doesn't answer. He holds his stomach, taking deep breaths.

VOICE (CONT'D)
God loves his children, Donnie. God loves you.

There... standing on the seventh hole is a six-foot-tall figure dressed in a grotesque bunny suit.
Donnie stares at the Bunny nervously as a wave of nausea overcomes him.

BUNNY
My name is Frank.
(beat)
I want you to follow me.

DONNIE
Why?

FRANK

I'm here to save you.

(beat)

The world is coming to an end, Donnie.

Donnie doesn't answer.

FRANK (CONT'D) Look up in the sky, Donnie.

He looks up into the black night.

FRANK (CONT'D)

28 days... 6 hours... 42 minutes... 12 seconds. That is when the world will end.

Donnie looks back at Frank. His expression is a vacant expanse of confusion.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Elizabeth comes through the front door, leans back against it, closes her eyes.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Eddie Darko sleeps reclined in the La-Z Boy. The final notes of the Channel 12 National Anthem fade away to static.

From above... a thunderous crash. Plaster rains from the ceiling... Books fly off the bookshelf as the entire wall-mount collapses to the floor.

Eddie jerks awake.

INT. FOYER - NEXT

Elizabeth falls back in horror as plaster rains down from around the chandelier... debris falling in the dining-room doorway.

EXT. SEVENTH HOLE - MORNING (SUNDAY MORNING, 10 A.M.)

Donnie is curled up, asleep on the green. A golf ball lands on the green and rolls within inches of his head.
A golf cart filled with four older men arrives. Dr. Fisher (forty-five) gets out first.

DR. FISHER

Donnie Darko?

(beat)

Son? What's going on here?

Jim Cunningham (forty), the man riding shotgun, gets out of the cart and walks over.

JIM CUNNINGHAM

Who is it, Don?

DR. FISHER

Eddie Darko's kid.

Donnie gets up and brushes himself off. On his arm he sees something written in black magic marker.
Numbers.... 28:06:42:12.
Donnie stares at the numbers on his arm, confused.

DR. FISHER (CONT'D)

(to Jim, kissing his ass)

Sorry about this, Jim, just a... a kid from the neighbourhood.

(back to Donnie)

So let's stay off the greens at night, OK?

Jim Cunningham stares at Donnie with a friendly grin.

DONNIE

Sorry, Dr. Fisher. It won't happen again.

EXT. NEIGHBOURHOOD STREET / DARKO HOUSE - MORNING (11 A.M.)

Donnie walks down the street towards his house.
A fire engine. Two police cars. A news van... All parked in front of his house.
There are dozens of neighbours in the street surrounding a barricade. Donnie moves through the crowd where a Police Officer is standing.

DONNIE

Hey, I live here!

POLICE OFFICER

Are you... Donnie Darko?

DONNIE

Yeah!

The Officer lets him through.

Near the cul-de-sac there is a large caterpillar crane lifting something from inside the house. There are firemen roaming around. Two Police Officers are speaking with Eddie and Rose.

Donnie looks over at the house.

A crane lifts a gigantic jet engine over from the house towards a large flatbed truck. Firemen kick pieces of wood and shingle from the roof.

He turns and sees his entire family standing there. Eddie is holding Samantha.

SAMANTHA

It fell on your room.

EXT. CUL-DE-SAC - LATER ON

Two men in suits approach from a black sedan. A police officer directs them to Rose. One of the men removes a badge from his pocket and holds it up for Rose to see.

MAN

Mrs. Darko, my name is Bob Garland and this is David Coleman. We're with the FAA. If you don't mind, we'd like to speak with you and your husband privately.

Elizabeth looks over at Donnie with a grin.

ELIZABETH

(whispering)
They don't know where it came from.

Donnie looks over in awe as the mammoth engine is now strapped to the flatbed truck. A man in a silver firesuit sprays the engine down with water.

EXT. CUL-DE-SAC - MOMENTS LATER

Eddie is signing some documents in front of Garland at a table that has been set up. Another FAA guy is there.

FAA MAN
(pointing to the document)
And then here as well.

Eddie signs off, and Garland takes the documents.

GARLAND
We've arranged for you to stay at a hotel, get some sleep. We'll take care of things here.

Eddie picks Samantha up into his arms. He stands with Rose and Elizabeth... turning towards Donnie... who seems lost in a trance.

EDDIE
Come on, Donnie... we're going to a hotel.

INT. HOLIDAY INN, ROOM 614 - SUNDOWN (SUNDAY NIGHT, 5:30 P.M.)

Donnie lies in bed, watching television. Elizabeth is spread out on the other bed. Samantha sits on the edge of Elizabeth's bed, holding a stuffed unicorn named Ariel.

SAMANTHA

If it fell from a plane, then what happened to the plane?

ELIZABETH

They don't know, Samantha.

SAMANTHA

Is there any way that we can make money from this? Couldn't we get on television if we sue the airline?

INT. HOLIDAY INN, ROOM 615 - NEXT

Rose and Eddie lie awake in the dark.

ROSE

So let me get this straight. No airline will claim ownership of the engine. So we have to wait for the FAA to decide who fixes my roof.

(beat)

Fuck that. We're taking the money out of savings.

EDDIE

(quoting Rod Serling)

You are entering a new dimension of sight and sound...

Rose begins to laugh.

INT. HOLIDAY INN, ROOM 614 - NEXT

SAMANTHA

Why do I have to sleep with Donnie? He stinks.

DONNIE

When you fall asleep tonight, I'm gonna fart in your face.

SAMANTHA

(walking to the door)

I'm telling Mom.

ELIZABETH

Samantha, don't go over there.

INT. HOLIDAY INN, ROOM 615 - LATER THAT NIGHT

EDDIE

Frankie Feedler.

ROSE

What?

EDDIE

Frankie Feedler. You remember him from high school?

ROSE

(long beat)

He was a year ahead of us?

EDDIE

He died, remember? On the way to the prom.

(beat)

He was doomed.

Rose lies there silently.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ. They could have said the same thing about Donnie. Our Donnie.

(beat)

But he dodged it. He dodged his bullet, Rose.

Rose rolls over to embrace him.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

That's my boy.

Moments later, the door to the adjoining room opens. It is Samantha.

SAMANTHA

Mom, Donnie said he's gonna fart in my face.

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EXT. BUS STOP - MORNING (MONDAY MORNING, 7 A.M.)

Rose drops Donnie and Samantha off at the corner.

ROSE

Ms. Farmer will pick you up from recital. Bye, now.

She pulls of in the Taurus.
Already waiting at the bus stop is Joanie James (eleven). Also Cherita Chen (fifteen).

SAMANTHA

Hi, Cherita.

CHERITA

Chut up.

Also there are Donnie's two best friends, Sean Smith (sixteen) and Ronald Fisher (fifteen)

RONALD

(raising his hands in victory)

DARKO CHEATS DEATH! Man... you're famous! I called you, like, a jillion times last night!

DONNIE

We went to a hotel.

RONALD

My dad said he found you on the golf course. Are you sleepwalking again?

DONNIE

I don't wanna talk about it.

SEAN

Now that you're famous, you gotta have a smoke.

Sean hands Donnie a Marlboro Red and he takes it, looking over at Samantha and Joanie.

DONNIE

What happens if you tell Mom and Dad about this, Samantha?

SAMANTHA

You'll put Ariel in the garbage disposal.

JOANIE

So... grody.

Sean, Ronald and Donnie light up. Ronald is the most amateur-looking.

SEAN

Hey, Cherita... want a cigarette?

CHERITA

Chut up.

RONALD

(mimicking)

Chut up!

SEAN

Go back to China, bitch!

DONNIE

Leave her alone, man.

Cherita looks over at Donnie... her quiet devastation poorly hidden.

EXT. / INT. MIDDLESEX RIDGE SCHOOL - MORNING (8 A.M.)

The following montage is three long Steadicam shots in the main school hallway and courtyard.

We follow Donnie and his friends as they pour out of the back of the emergency exit of the school bus to "Head Over Heels" by Tears for Fears.

We pick up teachers Karen Pomeroy (twenty-seven) and Dr. Kenneth Monnitoff (thirty) and Kitty Farmer (forty-two), with Jim Cunningham, as they make their way through the hallways.

Swarms of girls surround Donnie as he makes his way to his locker. There is a huge smile on his face.

We reveal Gretchen Ross (fifteen)... we see Principal Cole (thirty-eight) and then Samantha's dance team (Sparkle Motion) practising their routine

in the courtyard.

We follow Ms. Pomeroy into English class... then time-lapse dissolve through the doorway...

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - DAY (8:30 A.M.)

Ms. Pomeroy has been reading from "The Destructors" by Graham Greene.

MS. POMEROY

"There would be headlines in the papers. Even the grown-up gangs who ran the betting at the all-in wrestling and the barrow-boys would hear with respect how Old Misery's house had been destroyed. It was as though his plan had been with him all his life, pondered through the seasons, now in his fifteenth year crystallised with the pain of puberty."

Donnie sits in the front.

MS. POMEROY (CONT'D)

What is Graham Greene trying to communicate in this passage? Why do the children break into Old Misery's house?

Joanie James raises her hand.

MS. POMEROY (CONT'D)

Joanie.

JOANIE

They wanted to rob him.

MS. POMEROY

Joanie, if you had actually read the short story... which, at a whopping thirteen pages must have kept you up all night, you would know that the children find a great deal of money hidden in a mattress. But they burn it.

The class gives an " Awwww." Joanie blushes.

MS. POMEROY (CONT'D)

Donnie Darko, perhaps, given your recent brush with mass destruction, you can give us your opinion?

DONNIE

Well... they say it right when they are ripping the place to shreds. When they flood the house. That like... destruction is a form of creation. So the fact that they burn the money is... ironic. They just want to see what happens when they tear the world apart.

(beat)

They want to change things.

Gretchen Ross stands at the doorway to the classroom.

MS. POMEROY

May we help you?

GRETCHEN

I just registered, and I think they put me in the wrong English class.

Ms. Pomeroy studies her.

MS. POMEROY

You look like you belong here.

GRETCHEN

Umm, where do I sit?

Ms. Pomeroy thinks for a moment. There are several empty chairs.

MS. POMEROY

Sit next to the boy you think is the cutest. Girls, get up.

The whole class begins to freak out. The girls all get out of their seats... eating this up. Ronald fixes his hair.

MS. POMEROY (CONT'D)

Quiet! Let her choose.

Without hesitation, Gretchen scans the class for every guy. As she gracefully takes her seat next to Donnie, they make eye contact. Donnie grins ear to ear.

The class freaks out laughing.

INT. TAURUS - SUNSET (MONDAY NIGHT, 6 P.M.)

Eddie drives Donnie down Old Gun Road, a windy back-road that goes towards the country.

EDDIE

So how was school today?

DONNIE

It was great. We had peanut-butter sandwiches and apples and honey at snacktime. And then during show-and-tell, my stuffed walrus was a big hit.

EDDIE

Good Lord.

(beat)

So the construction guys say it'll take about a week to fix the roof. Damn airline better not fuck us on the shingle match.

DONNIE

Do they know yet?

EDDIE

Know what?

DONNIE

Where it came from?

EDDIE

No... apparently they can't tell us what happened yet. Something about a matching serial number that got burned.

(beat)

But I had to sign a form saying I wouldn't talk to anyone about it.

DONNIE

So we're not supposed to tell anybody what nobody knows?

EDDIE

You tell Dr. Thurman whatever you want.

Suddenly, Eddie slams on the brakes and the station wagon comes to a sudden stop.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Oh, shit!

DONNIE

Grandma Death.

Standing in the road directly in front of the car is Roberta Sparrow (101 years old, a.k.a. Grandma Death).

Grandma Death lives in a modest brick house that sits back in a huge grassy field that overlooks the entire town. Her mailbox sits on the edge of Old Gun Road.

EXT. OLD GUN ROAD - NEXT

Donnie gets out of the car and takes Grandma Death's hand, walking her back towards her mailbox. He opens it for her.

DONNIE

No mail today.

(smiles)

Maybe tomorrow.

Grandma Death smiles back at him... and begins to walk slowly back to her house. She then turns and takes Donnie's hands into her frail grip.

GRANDMA DEATH

(speaking slowly)

Every living creature... on this earth...

(beat)

...dies alone.

Donnie stands there silently for a moment, and then Grandma Death turns back towards her house.

EXT. DR. THURMAN'S RANCH - SUNSET

We see a large colonial rancher in the distance.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - EVENING

Dr. Lilian Thurman (fifty-eight) is a beautiful older woman.

DR. THURMAN

Your mother said that you've been skipping cycles of your medication.

DONNIE

I've been taking it. I just like to make her feel guilty for all of this. You know, abuse her. Psychologically.

DR. THURMAN

All of this... certainly isn't your mother's fault, Donald.

He is quiet for a moment.

DONNIE

So, I met a new friend.

DR. THURMAN

Would you like to talk about this friend?

DONNIE

His name is Frank.

DR. THURMAN

Frank.

DONNIE

I think he saved my life.

DR. THURMAN

How so?

DONNIE

Don't you watch the news?

DR. THURMAN

I don't own a television.

DONNIE

A jet engine fell on my house... landed on my bed. While I was talking to Frank on the golf course.

Dr. Thurman looks at him for a long beat, analysing whether or not he is telling her the truth.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

I'm not kidding.

Concerned, Dr. Thurman leans in closer.

DR. THURMAN

Frank... instructed you... to get out of bed... just before this happened.

DONNIE

He said to follow him.

DR. THURMAN
Follow him where?

DONNIE
Into the future.
(beat)
Then he said that the world was coming to an end.

He rubs his arm, where the numbers are still lightly drawn.

DR. THURMAN
Do you believe that the world is coming to an end?

DONNIE
(long beat)
No.
(beat)
That's stupid.

INT. MIDDLESEX RIDGE SCHOOL - HALLWAY

In the empty school hallway... a gigantic tidal wave forms in the distance and comes crashing towards us between the lockers.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT (EARLY TUESDAY MORNING, 2 A.M.)

Donnie lies on the couch... fast asleep. His eyes slowly open. There, standing in the corner of the room in the shadows is Frank.

FRANK

Wake up, Donnie.

INT. MIDDLESEX RIDGE SCHOOL - NIGHT

In the dark school hallway, Donnie rounds the corner with a flashlight, a can of spray paint, and an axe.

Frank stands in the same hallway where the tidal wave crashed.

INT. SCHOOL BASEMENT - NEXT

Donnie shines the flashlight through the basement. He approaches some old piping. Donnie puts the axe back over his shoulder and then lowers it fiercely. The smashing of metal against metal echoes through the huge room.

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EXT. BUS STOP - MORNING (7:45 A.M.)

The same group stands and waits for the bus. The guys smoke.

Cherita stands alone. Samantha is reading something to Joanie.

SAMANTHA

(reading)

"And then the prince was led into a world of strange and beautiful magic."

JOANIE

Wow.

Donnie grabs the piece of paper from his sister.

DONNIE

(reading out loud)

"The Last Unicorn!" By Samantha Darko.

SAMANTHA

Donnie! Give it back!

He pushes her away.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

You're wrinkling it!

SEAN

Hey, it's 7:45. The bus shoulda been here, like, twenty minutes ago.

RONALD

Maybe Martha Moo finally went nuts and hijacked the bus.

SEAN

(excited)

You know, there's, like, this rule. We get to go home at 7:55.

RONALD

There's no rule!

SEAN

Fuck yeah there is! If the bus doesn't show up in thirty minutes, you're supposed to go straight home.

DONNIE

Yeah... he's right. Because if we keep waiting, some guy in a van might pull up and try to molest us. And then our parents could sue the school board.

Everyone starts to get excited... looking down the road to see if the bus is coming.

Sean's watch hits 7:55. No bus.

SEAN

All right! 7:55. Everybody goes home.

RONALD

Let's go to Donnie's house. His parents are both at work.

The three guys begin walking.

DONNIE

Come on, Sam, you can call Joanie's mom from home.

The two girls follow them. Cherita stands at the corner.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Hey, Cherita... you should go home.

SEAN

Yeah, if you're still here and the bus comes, we'll get in trouble.

CHERITA

Chut up.

SEAN

Hey, porky pig. I hope you get molested!

Suddenly, Emily Bates (ten) and Susie Bates (eight) run up to the bus stop.

EMILY

Hey! Our mom said that school is cancelled today because it's flooded!

JOANIE

No... way.

A horrible expression appears on Donnie's face.

INT. MIDDLESEX RIDGE SCHOOL - MORNING

A janitor named Leroy (fifty-five) stands at the end of the hall with Principal Cole. Water rushes past their feet down the steps.

LEROY

I got twelve classrooms full of water. All coming from a busted water main.

PRINCIPAL COLE

What else?

LEROY

What else? Shit, Principal Cole, you ain't gonna believe what else.

EXT. BACK COURTYARD - MORNING

They stand before the bronze Middlesex mongrel. Spray-painted on the concrete before it is the phrase:

THEY MADE ME DO IT.

There are papers strewn everywhere. Embedded in the head of the mongrel is an axe.

PRINCIPAL COLE

Christ. Is that an axe?

LEROY

Yep.

PRINCIPAL COLE

How did this happen?

LEROY

(beat)

I guess they made him do it.

Leroy can't help himself. He has to laugh.

PRINCIPAL COLE

You're fired.

Principal Cole walks off.

EXT. BUS STOP 2 - EARLY MORNING (8:15 A.M.)

Donnie, Sean, Ronald, Samantha and Joanie, Emily and Susie walk from their bus stop.

RONALD

School's closed! Everybody go home!

EMILY

Nu-huh.

SAMANTHA

Yeah-huh. A cat burglar broke him and trashed everything.

Susie talks with Emily. Joanie and Samantha listen in.

EMILY

Mom said that the boys' locker room looked like a swimming pool... and that they found faeces everywhere.

SUSIE

What are faeces?

EMILY

Baby mice.

SUSIE

Aww.

JOANIE

Oh my God, that is so grody.

EXT. BUS STOP 3 - NEXT Sean looks down to another bus stop down the street.

SEAN

School's cancelled! A bunch of young kids scream out... jumping up and down.

EXT. BUS STOP 4 - NEXT

Donnie approaches another corner alone. Ricky Danforth (seventeen) and Seth Devlin (eighteen) stand with Gretchen.

SETH (smoking a cigarette)

Has anyone ever told you that you're sexy?

RICKY

I like your boobs.

Gretchen looks at them with disgust.

Donnie walks into the group.

DONNIE

Hey...

GRETCHEN

Hey...

DONNIE

School's cancelled.

They look at one another, surprised.

GRETCHEN

(to Donnie)

Wanna walk me home?

DONNIE

Sure.

They quickly begin to walk off. Seth and Ricky look off at them, furious.

GRETCHEN

Don't look so freaked.

DONNIE

I'm not. But you should check your backpack 'cause those guys like to steal shit.

GRETCHEN

Fuck them.

Gretchen smiles at Donnie, and then turns back and gives them the middle finger.

EXT. NEIGHBOURHOOD STREET - NEXT (8:30 A.M.)

Donnie and Gretchen walk along the sidewalk together.

DONNIE

So... you just moved here?

GRETCHEN

Yeah. My parents got divorced. My mom has a restraining order against my stepdad.

(beat)

He has... emotional problems.

DONNIE

Oh, I... have those too.

(beat)

What kind of problems does your dad have?

GRETCHEN

(long beat)

He stabbed my mom four times in the chest.

Donnie is shocked.

DONNIE

Wow. Did he go to jail?

GRETCHEN

He fled. They still can't find him.

(beat)

My mom and I had to change our names and stuff. I thought Gretchen sounded kind of cool.

DONNIE

I'm sorry. I was in jail once.

(beat)

I accidentally burned down this house. It was abandoned. (MORE)

DONNIE (CONT'D)

I got held back in school again. Can't drive until I'm eighteen.

(babbling)

I think when I grow up I want to be a painter. Or maybe a writer or maybe both. Then I'll write a book and draw the illustrations like a comic book. You know, change things.

GRETCHEN

Donnie Darko is a cool name. Sounds like a superhero.

DONNIE

What makes you think I'm not?

Gretchen smiles. She looks over at her house.

GRETCHEN

I should go. For physics. Monnitoff says I have to write an essay on the greatest invention ever to

benefit mankind.

DONNIE

That's easy. Antiseptics.

She gives him a look.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

I mean, the whole sanitation thing. Joseph Lister... 1895. Before antiseptics there was no sanitation, especially in medicine.

GRETCHEN

You mean soap?

DONNIE

Don't knock soap. Without it, disease would spread rapidly. If we ran out... you and I would never live to see the year 2000.

GRETCHEN

Wonder where we'll be then.

DONNIE

The best thing about soap is that it's the only thing on earth that can never get dirty. No matter what crap you throw on it... it always rubs off. And there it is again... perfect.

GRETCHEN

Until it withers away.

She stares at him for a moment.

DONNIE

It's a good thing the school was flooded today.

GRETCHEN

Why is that?

DONNIE

We never would have had this conversation.

She smiles.

GRETCHEN

You're weird.

DONNIE

I'm sorry.

GRETCHEN

That was a compliment.

DONNIE

Will you go with me?

GRETCHEN

Where are we going?

DONNIE

No... I mean, will you GO with me? That's like... what they call it here. Going together.

GRETCHEN

(beat)

Sure.

She gets up and begins to walk up the hill.

DONNIE

Where are you going?

GRETCHEN

I'm going home.

OCTOBER 6 1988

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - EVENING (THURSDAY, 6 P.M.)

Dr. Thurman sits next to Donnie. His eyes are closed.

DR. THURMAN

And when I clap my hands twice, you will wake up. Do you understand?

DONNIE

Yes.

DR. THURMAN

So, tell me about your day, Donald.

DONNIE

I met a girl.

DR. THURMAN

What is her name?

DONNIE

Gretchen. We're going together now.

DR. THURMAN

Do you think a lot about girls?

DONNIE

Yes.

DR. THURMAN

How are things going at school?

DONNIE

I think about girls a lot.

DR. THURMAN

I asked you about school.

DONNIE

I think about.. Fucking a lot during school.

DR. THURMAN

What else do you think about during school?

DONNIE

I think... about... "Who's the Boss?"

DR. THURMAN

Who is the boss?

DONNIE

I just turn the volume down and think about fucking Alyssa Milano.

DR. THURMAN

What about your family, Donnie?

DONNIE

No, I don't think about fucking my family. That's sick!

DR. THURMAN

Donnie... I want to hear about your friend Frank.

Donnie is now undoing his belt. He is no longer paying attention.

Dr. Thurman quickly claps her hands. Donnie jolts awake... disoriented.

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - DAY (FRIDAY, 8:30 A.M.)

Donnie sits with his eyes wide open, staring at something.

POLICE OFFICER

(out of shot)

Aaron Armitage... Cherita Chen.

Donnie's face has gone white.

PRINCIPAL COLE

Donald Darko.

We reveal on the blackboard the phrase, "They made me do it", written over and over again.

We reveal two Police Officers standing next to Principal Cole in the corner of the classroom.

Donnie gets up and walks over to the board and writes the phrase.

He then sits down again without hesitation.

The Police Officer hesitates for a moment, lingering over Donnie's penmanship. He then places a '?' next to Donnie's name on the roster. Ms. Pomeroy makes eye-contact with him.

INT. HEALTH CLASS - AFTERNOON (FRIDAY, 1 P.M.)

We pull back from a television: a cloud formation blows across the screen revealing a logo that reads:

CUNNING VISIONS PRODUCTIONS.

A series of interviews follows.. infomercial style.

LINDA CONNIE

And what I realised was that my entire life I was a victim of my own FEAR. I was FEEDING FEAR WITH FOOD... and finally... I looked in the mirror. Not just IN THE MIRROR. (MORE)

LINDA CONNIE (CONT'D)

I looked THROUGH the mirror. And in that image I saw my EGO REFLECTION.

Donnie's health class is assembled in uniform rows in front of a television cart. Ms. Farmer paces in front of them.

SHANDA RIESMAN

(with her arm around her geeky son)

...and for two years I thought it was NORMAL for a fifteen-year-old to wet the bed.

Laughter from the students.

MS. FARMER

QUIET!

SHANDA RIESMAN

(choking up)

We tried everything. But the solution was there... all along.

LARRY RIESMAN

(burst out emotionally)

I'm not AFRAID anymore!

A montage of "family" imagery follows.

NARRATOR

All across America... people have come together to join hands. People who believe that human life is too important... too valuable to be controlled by FEAR.

A middle-aged man walks out onto a country patio. It is Jim Cunningham... the guy from the golf course.

JIM CUNNINGHAM

Hello. My name is Jim Cunningham. And welcome to "Controlling Fear".

The title CONTROLLING FEAR appears on the screen... followed by PART ONE: ATTITUDINAL BELIEFS.

FRANK (V.O.)
Pay close attention, you could miss something.

Donnie stares at the screen... at Jim Cunningham.

EXT. OLD GUN RUINS - AFTERNOON (FRIDAY MAGIC HOUR, 4:30 P.M.)

The ruins of a brick chimney sit in the middle of a field. Donnie, Sean and Ronald have lined up several empty beer bottles, cans and stuffed animals on the hearth.

They take turns blasting these targets with a BB gun.

Blam! A can falls over. Ronald hands the gun to Donnie. Sean pulls out a bottle of Raspberry Night Train and takes a sip. He hands the bottle to Ronald.

RONALD
What is this shit?

SEAN
Raspberry.

He takes a big sip... which results in a dry heave.

RONALD

Raspberry. That's good shit.

Donnie aims the crosshairs on Smurfette's head. He pulls the trigger. Smurfette falls over.

RONALD (CONT'D)

Wicked.

SEAN

No more fuckin' for her.

RONALD

Smurfette doesn't fuck.

SEAN

Bullshit. Smurfette fucks all the other smurfs. That's why Papa Smurf made her, 'cause the other smurfs were getting too horny.

RONALD

Not Vanity. He's a homo.

Blam! A bottle shatters.

SEAN

Then she fucks 'em all while Vanity watches. And Papa Smurf films it.

Ronald takes another sip of Night Train... followed by another dry heave. Blam! A bottle breaks.

DONNIE

First of all... Papa Smurf didn't create Smurfette. Gargamel did. She was sent in as Gargemel's evil spy, with the intention of destroying the smurf village. But the overwhelming Goodness of the Smurf Way of Life transformed her into the Smurfette we all know and love. And as for the whole gang-bang scenario... it just couldn't happen. Smurfs are asexual. They probably don't even have reproductive organs down there under those little white pants. The only reason they exist is because of magic spells and witchcraft... which is all a bunch of bullshit if you ask me.

(beat)

That's what's so illogical about the smurfs... what's the point of living if you don't have a dick?

Donnie aims the gun... pulls the trigger. Blam! A bottle breaks.

RONALD

Dammit, Donnie! Why do you always gotta get all smart on us!

Donnie takes the bottle of Night Train and takes a small sip.

Their conversation is interrupted by the squealing of tyres.

EXT. OLD GUN ROAD - NEXT (MAGIC HOUR, 5 P.M.)

Down the hill, a Dodge minivan is stopped on Old Gun Road.

Grandma Death is once again in the middle of the street.

DONNIE
Grandma Death.

Ms. farmer leans her head out of the window.

MS. FARMER
Excuse me!

Grandma Death doesn't hear her. She wanders around in circles.

Furious, Ms. Farmer gets out of the car and walks over to the old woman, walking her by the shoulders back to her driveway.

MS. FARMER (CONT'D)
Please stay out of the road, Ms. Sparrow. If this happens again, I'm going to call social services.

Ms. Farmer gets back behind the wheel and they drive off.

Grandma Death lurks around her mailbox.

RONALD

How old is Grandma Death?

DONNIE

A hundred and one, I think. Every day she does the same thing. But there's never any mail.

Grandma Death approaches the mailbox.

SEAN

Here we go... this could be it.

She opens it... then closes it. Walks away.

RONALD

Awwww. That sucks.

She approaches the box again...

SEAN

Wait a minute... we may still have mail...

Opens it... closes it. Walks away.

RONALD

Noooo!

They continue to watch her, sipping liquor into the sunset, as Grandma Death repeats this act like an ancient wind-up doll.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - EVENING (FRIDAY, 7 P.M.)

Donnie lies on the couch watching television... where there is a news story about the flooded school. Several construction workers are packing up their things.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER (7:15 P.M.)

Looking nauseous, Donnie opens the medicine cabinet and retrieves his pills. He takes four of them. Donnie takes a drink of water, closing his eyes. He puts the pills back and closes the cabinet.

In the mirror's reflection is Frank. Donnie jumps.

FRANK

You got away with it. Don't worry.

Donnie reaches his hand out towards Frank and it presses against an invisible wall, as if he were pressing his hand against liquid glass.

DONNIE

How can you do that?

FRANK

I can do anything I want... and so can you...

Donnie stares closely at Frank. He then removes his hands and moves back away from him.

EXT. MIDDLESEX SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - EVENING (7:15 P.M.)

A sign reads: EMERGENCY PTA MEETING TONIGHT.

INT. AUDITORIUM - EVENING (7:15 P.M.)

Parents and teachers convene in front of the auditorium entrance.

Kitty Farmer hands out Xeroxed images of something.

Eddie and Rose chit-chat with other concerned parents.

Ms. Pomeroy approaches Kitty Farmer.

MS. POMEROY

What are you trying to accomplish here?

MS. FARMER

(indignant)

There was urine and faeces flooded in my office.

INT. AUDITORIUM - LATER ON

The crowd settles... Principal Cole takes the stage.

PRINCIPAL COLE

In co-operation with the county police, we have begun an active investigation into the cause of the flooding... and our suspects include several of our own students. Kitty Farmer stands up in her seat near the front row.

MS. FARMER

I want to know why this FILTH is being taught to our children.

The crowd stirs.

PRINCIPAL COLE

Kitty, I would appreciate... if you could wait...

MS. FARMER

Mr. Cole... not only am I a TEACHER... but I am also a PARENT of a Middlesex child. Therefore, I am the ONLY person here who transcends the parent-teacher bridge.

PRINCIPAL COLE

Kitty...

MS. FARMER

The bottom line... Mr. Cole... is that there is material being taught to our children that is cause for this destructive behaviour.

She stands up.

MS. FARMER (CONT'D)

I have in my hand Graham Greene's "The Destructors". This short story is part of my daughter's English assignment. In this story, several children destroy an elderly man's house from inside out. They destroy his house without motive, without moral consequence. They destroy private property... and they get away with it.

Ms. Pomeroy shakes her head bitterly.

MS. FARMER (CONT'D)

And how do they do this? They FLOOD the house... by breaking through the water main!

PRINCIPAL COLE

(trying to calm her)

This meeting of the PTA was called to inform the parents of our ongoing investigation...

MS. FARMER

(enraged)

I AM THE PTA! And I say that this FILTH is directly related to this vandalism.

Applause from the crowd.

MS. FARMER (CONT'D)

I think this garbage should be removed.

Several shouts of approval come from the crowd.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - EVENING

Donnie continues to converse with Frank.

DONNIE
Why did you make me flood the school?

FRANK
We just want to guide you in the right direction.

DONNIE
Who is... we?

FRANK
You'll know soon enough.

DONNIE
(desperate)
Where did you come from?

FRANK
(beat)
Do you believe in time travel, Donnie?

A moment of silence.

SAMANTHA

Who are you talking to?

Donnie turns to see Samantha is standing in the doorway. Frank is gone.

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

A heated debate among the parents is under way. Frustrated, Rose stands up. Karen Pomeroy is furious.

ROSE

Excuse me... but what is the real issue here? The PTA doesn't ban books from school.

MS. FARMER

The PTA is here to acknowledge that there is pornography in our school's curriculum.

MS. POMEROY

(standing up)

My GOD... woman, are you drunk?

MS. FARMER

Excuse me? You need to go back to grad school.

ROSE

(to Kitty)

Do you even know who Graham Greene is?

MS. FARMER

(to Rose)

I think we've all seen "Bonanza".

Ms. Pomeroy is disgusted. Rose and Eddie burst out laughing, grab their coats, and leave.

EXT. WIZARD'S ARCADE - AFTERNOON (SATURDAY, 1 P.M.)

Donnie and Gretchen play a Sega race-car driving game. Donnie drives a souped-up red Ferrari through the Grand Canyon.

GRETCHEN

So when you sleepwalk, can you remember afterward? Like, do you dream?

DONNIE

No. I just wake up and I look around, try to figure out where I am... how I got there.

GRETCHEN

My dad said never wake a sleepwalker... because they could drop dead.

The Trans-Am crashes head on into a tree. Game Over.

DONNIE

It's like this big force... that's in your brain. But sometimes it grows bigger... and it spread down into your arms and legs... and it just sends you someplace.

GRETCHEN

So when you sleepwalk, you go somewhere familiar?

DONNIE

No. Every time I wake up somewhere different. Sometimes my bike is laying there next to me. Like once when I woke up on the edge of this cliff up on Carpathian Ridge.

GRETCHEN

And you'd never been there before?

They sit silently for a moment.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

Donnie?

DONNIE

Yeah?

GRETCHEN

Do you ever feel as though there's always someone watching you?

DONNIE

Why?

GRETCHEN

Well... maybe someone is, like... giving you these dream steroids. And sleepwalking... is someone showing you the way.

OCTOBER 13 1988

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - MORNING (THURSDAY, 8 A.M.)

Donnie stands in front of the class. Ms. Pomeroy sits behind her desk. On the chalkboard is "Poetry Day".

DONNIE

"A storm is coming, Frank says. A storm that will swallow the children... and I will deliver them from the kingdom of pain."

(beat)

"I will deliver the children to their doorsteps. I will send the monsters back to the underground. I will send them back to a place where no one can see them... except for me. Because I am Donnie Darko."

Donnie returns to his seat. Ms. Pomeroy stares at him intensely.

MS. POMEROY

Who is Frank?

DONNIE

A six-foot-tall bunny rabbit.

The class begins to laugh. Donnie looks over at Gretchen.

INT. HEALTH CLASS - AFTERNOON (THURSDAY, 1 P.M.)

Ms. Farmer stands next to the television where Jim Cunningham narrates the Lifeline tutorial.

JIM CUNNINGHAM

And so, let us begin Lifeline Exercise No. 1.

"PLEASE PRESS STOP NOW" appears on the screen.

Ms. Farmer stops the tape and moves to the blackboard. On it, she has drawn a horizontal line book-ended by the words "Love" and "Fear".

MS. FARMER

As you can see, the Lifeline is controlled by two polar extremes: "Fear" and "Love". Fear is in the negative energy spectrum. Love is in the positive energy spectrum.

SEAN

(to Donnie)

No duh.

MS. FARMER

Excuse me?

(defensive)

"No duh " is a product of fear.

She stares them down for a moment... shaking her head.

MS. FARMER (CONT'D)

(handing out cards)

Now, on each card is a CHARACTER DILEMMA which applies to the Lifeline. Please read each character dilemma aloud... and place an X on the Lifeline in the appropriate place.

The students read their cards.

KITTY FARMER

We'll start in the front.

Cherita Chen stands up and walks over to the blackboard. Ms. Farmer pulls up large white cards that have black-and-white animated cartoons on them.

CHERITA

Juanita has an important maths test today. She has known about the test for several weeks, but has not studied. In order to keep from failing her class, Juanita decides that she will cheat on the maths test.

Cherita places an X near the "Fear" end of the lifeline.

MS. FARMER

Good. Next.

Donnie watches as several more students interpret their respective human dilemmas.

Finally... it is his turn.

DONNIE

Ling Ling finds a wallet on the ground filled with money. She takes the wallet to the address on the driver's license but keeps the money inside the wallet.

Donnie looks at the blackboard.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Ms. Farmer, I just don't get this.

MS. FARMER

(impatient)

Just place an X in the appropriate place on the Lifeline.

DONNIE

I just don't get this. Everything can't be lumped into two categories. That's too simple.

MS. FARMER

The Lifeline is divided that way.

DONNIE

Well, life isn't that simple. So what if Ling Ling kept the cash and returned the wallet? That has nothing to do with either fear or love.

MS. FARMER

(impatient)
Fear and love are the deepest of human emotions.

DONNIE
Well, yeah... OK, but you're not listening to me. There are other things that need to be taken into account here. Like the whole spectrum of human emotion. You're just lumping everything into these two categories... and, like, denying everything else.

Ms. Farmer stares at Donnie vehemently. She can't believe what she's hearing.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
People aren't that simple.

MS. FARMER
(not knowing how to argue with him)
If you don't complete the assignment, you'll get a zero for the day.

Donnie thinks for a moment... and then raises his hand.

INT. PRINCIPAL COLE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON (2 P.M.)

Donnie and his parents sit in front of Principal Cole.

PRINCIPAL COLE

Donald... let me preface this by saying that your Iowa scores are...

(looking down at the file)

...intimidating.

(rubbing his temples)

So... let's go over this again. What exactly did you say to Ms. Farmer?

Donnie does not answer. We reveal Ms. Farmer standing in the corner.

MS. FARMER

(furious)

He asked me to... forcibly insert the Lifeline exercise card into my anus.

Silence. Rose looks down, furious. Eddie lets out a snort laugh which he tries to conceal with a cough. It doesn't work.

INT. TEACHERS' LOUNGE / OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER (2:15 P.M.)

Eddie and Donnie exit Cole's office, moving on while Rose approaches Kitty, who looks visibly shaken.

ROSE

Kitty, I don't know what to say. They've suspended him for two days.

(beat)

Ever since this jet fiasco, I honestly don't know what has gotten into him.

MS. FARMER

Rose, I'll tell you this because our daughters have been on dance team together for two years and I respect you as WOMAN. But after witnessing your son's behaviour today, I have... significant doubts...

(stopping herself)

Our paths through life must be righteous. I urge you to go home and look in the mirror and pray that your son does not succumb to the path of fear.

Kitty Farmer turns and walks away.

EXT. DARKO BACKYARD / PATIO - SUNSET (MAGIC HOUR, 5:30 P.M.)

Samantha jumps up and down on the trampoline.

INT. DONNIE'S ROOM - NIGHT (5:30 P.M.)

Donnie walks into his room again for the first time since the accident, looking around at the new furniture, paint and carpet. Everything is perfect.

Elizabeth appears in the doorway behind him with a cordless phone in her hand.

ELIZABETH

(into the phone)

Oh my God, remember that gym teacher, Ms. Farmer?

(beat)

Yeah. Well, I guess my brother called her a fat bitch today in class and got suspended. And my parents just bought him all of this new shit.

(beat)

Yeah, I know. I wish a jet engine would have fallen on my room.

INT. MARINO'S ITALIAN BISTRO - NIGHT (6 P.M.)

Eddie and Rose sit across from one another at the bistro patio... having a quiet dinner to themselves.

ROSE

He's too old to be behaving this way.

Eddie considers this.

EDDIE

Oh, I say we buy him a moped.

INT. DONNIE'S ROM - NIGHT (7 P.M.)

Donnie lies in bed... looking up at the ceiling. He then rolls over and looks at the calendar on his wall. The days of the month of October are

marked off with an X in each square. Tacked onto the calendar is a drawing of Frank.

DONNIE

28 days, 6 hours, 42 minutes, 12 seconds.

INT. PHYSICS CLASS - DAY (FRIDAY, 2:30 P.M.)

As everyone is leaving class, Donnie stays behind.

DONNIE

Dr. Monnitoff?

DR. MONNITOFF

Donnie.

DONNIE

I know that this is gonna sound kinda weird... but do you know anything about time travel?

Dr. Monnitoff pauses, turns and looks at Donnie. He seems to know something.

INT. PHYSICS CLASS - LATER ON

Dr. Monnitoff has drawn a diagram on the blackboard. In his hand he holds a copy of Stephen Hawking's "A Brief History of Time".

DR. MONNITOFF

So... according to Hawking... wormholes might be able to provide a shot cut for jumping between two distant regions of space-time.

DONNIE

So... in order to travel back in time, you'd have to have a big spaceship or something that can travel faster than the speed of light...

DR. MONNITOFF

Theoretically.

DONNIE

... and be able to find one of these wormholes.

DR. MONNITOFF

A wormhole with an Einstein-Rosen bridge, which is, theoretically... a wormhole in space controlled by man.

DONNIE

So... that's it?

DR. MONNITOFF

The basic principles of time travel are there.

(beat)

So you have the vessel and the portal. And the vessel can be anything. Most likely a spacecraft.

EXT. SCHOOL COURTYARD - NEXT

Cherita Chen listens to this conversation intently.

INT. PHYSICS CLASS - NEXT

DONNIE

Like a DeLorean.

DR. MONNITOFF

(smiling)

A metal craft of any kind.

Donnie stares at him intently. Dr. Monnitoff walks over to his desk and picks up a book.

DR. MONNITOFF (CONT'D)

Don't tell anybody that I gave you this.

(beat)

The woman who wrote it... used to teach here a long time ago. She was a nun for many years and then overnight she just became this entirely different person. She up and left the Church, wrote this book, and started teaching science.

Donnie takes the battered book... we see the cover.

INT. SCHOOL MAIN HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Donnie stands before an array of old photographs. We zoom in to a black-and-white photograph of a young Robert Sparrow standing in a class photograph dated 1944.

Donnie looks down at the book, and then at the photograph.

DONNIE

Roberta Sparrow... Grandma Death.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT (FRIDAY, 6 P.M.)

Donnie sits down for dinner with his family.

DONNIE

It's called "The Philosophy of Time Travel".

ELIZABETH

What does time travel have to do with philosophy?

DONNIE

Guess who wrote it?

No one seems to know.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Grandma Death.

ROSE

That is a terrible nickname.

EDDIE

Grandma Death.

DONNIE

(to Eddie)

You know, Roberta Sparrow. We almost hit her with the car the other day.

ROSE

I've heard she's loaded.

The family is taken aback.

EDDIE

You're right. Roberta Sparrow was famous for her gem collections. Kids used to try and steal stuff from her all the time. Over the years... as she got older, she became more and more of a recluse... now she just likes to stay up there all by herself.

DONNIE

I guess she just lost faith in the world.

EXT. DARKO BACKYARD - SUNSET (SATURDAY, 5:30 P.M.)

Slow motion. Donnie and Gretchen jump up and down on the trampoline, lost among falling autumn leaves.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY (SUNDAY, 12 P.M.)

Donnie is back on Dr. Thurman's couch.

DR. THURMAN

How many times have you seen Frank?

DONNIE

Four times... so far.

DR. THURMAN

Can anyone else see him?

DONNIE

I don't think so. It's like a TV station. And they're tuned into mine and no one else's.

DR. THURMAN

Who is they? Is Frank part of some larger group?

DONNIE

I don't know. Gretchen has a theory. That Frank is a sign. I told her I thought it was ridiculous.

DR. THURMAN

A sign from whom?

DONNIE

(changing the subject)

I think that Frank wants me to go to this woman.

(holding up the book)

She wrote a book about time travel. Frank asked me if I believed in time travel. That can't just be a random coincidence.

(beat)

My dad almost hit her with the car the other day, and she said the creepiest thing. She said that every living creature on this earth dies alone.

DR. THURMAN

How does that make you feel?

DONNIE

It reminded me of my dog Callie.

DR. THURMAN

Is Callie still around?

DONNIE

No. She died when I was eight. We couldn't find her for days. She went and crawled underneath our back porch...

DR. THURMAN

Do you feel alone right now?

He looks at her for a moment.

DONNIE

I'd like to believe that I'm not... but I've just never seen any proof. So I just choose not to bother with it. It's, like, I could spend my whole life thinking about it... debating it in my head. Weighing the pros

and cons. And in the end, I still wouldn't have any proof. So... I don't even debate it any more. Because it's absurd.

(beat)

I don't want to be alone.

(beat)

So, does that make me, like, an atheist?

DR. THURMAN

No. That makes you keep searching.

Donnie takes this in for a moment.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - EVENING (SUNDAY, 7:15 P.M.)

Eddie and Dr. Fisher watch the Redskins game. Ronald and Donnie watch the game in the family room.

EDDIE

Ahh... we need Theisman.

DR. FISHER

We need a miracle.

INT. KITCHEN - NEXT

Rose and Anne Fisher (forty-five) share a bottle of wine at the kitchen table.

ANNE

And so, his tapes made me realise that for forty-five years I have been a a prisoner of fear. Rose, you have to meet Jim Cunningham.

(taking a sip of wine)

I can't believe he's not married.

Samantha bounces through the kitchen and into the family room, wearing a Dorothy outfit from "The Wizard of Oz".

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NEXT

Donnie sits back in the La-Z Boy, dozing off...

John Madden's CBS chalkboard unfolds on the TV screen. Madden traces his electronic lines across the screen, tracing the movement of the players... as their images are frozen in time.

Donnie's eyes close... and then re-open.

Donnie turns his head and sees that the room is momentarily bathed in artificial white light, as if God hit the slow-motion button during a flash of lightning.

Donnie turns his head and sees that protruding from his father's stomach... is a thick spear made of silvery plastic gel.

As Eddie gets up from the couch to walk over to the refrigerator... his spear precedes him... morphing into an extruded arrow that reaches the refrigerator several seconds before him.

The spear traces the exact geography of his movement through time... using his centre of gravity as its axis point.

Donnie turns and sees Samantha skipping from the kitchen... as her spear bounces several feet in front of her like a caterpillar.

Her spear... smaller than her father's... is proportional to her mass.

SAMANTHA

(her voice echoing through the silence)

Follow the yellow brick road...

Donnie looks down at his stomach and sees his own spear protruding outward. It then begins to extrude forward towards the foyer.

He does not follow it. It then retreats back in and beckons him to follow.

Like a child transfixed by a firefly... Donnie follows the path of his spear into the foyer.

INT. FOYER / UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NXT

Donnie and his spear round the corner and arrive in his parents' bedroom.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

His spear leads him to the closet. He opens the closet door... and the spear leads him down to a box hidden beneath his father's shoe rack.

Donnie removes the box from the closet and unlatches it. Inside is a gun. Donnie removes the pistol from the box... staring at it with the same

childlike expression.

Suddenly... Donnie's universe snaps back to normal. The white light strobes... the spear has vanished.

Donnie still holds the gun. His expression changes to nervous shock.

His eyes linger over the gun for a moment, he then quickly puts it back in the box... and carefully places the box back under the shoe rack.

OCTOBER 18 1988

EXT. BUS STOP - MORNING (TUESDAY, 7:30 A.M.)

The usual bus stop crew is there. Donnie arrives last... by himself. He looks tired and preoccupied.

A plane flies overhead... they all look up at the sky.

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - MORNING (8:30 A.M.)

We see the students placing the Graham Greene books on Ms. Pomeroy's desk.

MS. POMEROY

It gives me no pleasure to deny you the right to read one of the great writers of the twentieth century. But... alas, I have not yet been elected Queen of the Universe. And until that day, I will be forced to obey the rules... and so will you. So... if anyone is found carrying this book in school, they will be suspended.

Donnie slips his book into his backpack.

MS. POMEROY (CONT'D)

But let's not worry. Someone has already pre-ordered several dozen copies at Sarasota Mall Waldenbooks. Now, in Mr. Greene's absence, we will be reading another classic. Richard Adams' " Watership Down".

She begins to hand out copies of the paperback novel. Beth Farmer smiles when she sees the cover.

BETH

Awww. Bunnies.

MS. POMEROY

(whispering in his ear)

Donnie, maybe you and Frank can read this one together.

INT. SCHOOL BATHROOM - MIDDAY (11:30 A.M.)

Donnie walks along the edge of the school. Suddenly, a figure approaches, grabbing him from behind, placing a switchblade next to his throat. It is Seth Devlin.

SETH

Did you tell them that I flooded the school?

DONNIE

I didn't say shit.

SETH

That's not what I heard. Now they think I did it.

DONNIE

Well, if you're innocent, then you have nothing to worry about.

SETH

You know what? I think that you did it.

Seth takes the knife and pokes the tip softly into the flesh of Donnie's neck, drawing a small amount of blood.

He pushes Donnie away. Donnie touches his neck in shock.

INT. PHYSICS CLASS - DAY (2:30 P.M.)

Donnie walks into the classroom and takes his seat next to Gretchen. He is sweating profusely.

Dr. Monnitoff is handing out papers. The bell rings People shuffle out.

DR. MONNITOFF

Don't forget tomorrow we'll be meeting with our partners for the Young Inventors Fair.

Donnie rubs his finger over his neck wound.

GRETCHEN

What happened to your neck?

DONNIE

I don't want to talk about it.

(changing the subject)

So what happened to your neck?

EXT. GOLF COURSE FOREST - THAT AFTERNOON (3 P.M.)

Donnie and Gretchen walk around the trail.

GRETCHEN

Were you ever afraid of the dark?

They pull over to a stop.

DONNIE

Why?

She thinks for a moment.

GRETCHEN

Babies cry because they're afraid of the dark. And because they have no memories... for all they know... every night could be the last forever. Like, perpetual darkness.

DONNIE

Why not just buy your baby a night light?

GRETCHEN

That's not good enough. You've got to go back in time and take all those hours of darkness and pain and replace them... with whatever you wanted.

DONNIE

With, like, images?

GRETCHEN

Like... a Hawaiian sunset... the Grand Canyon. Things that remind you how beautiful the world can be.

Donnie stops and takes Gretchen's hand.

DONNIE

You know... we've been going together for a week and a half...

GRETCHEN

And what?

DONNIE

Well...

GRETCHEN

You want to kiss me...

Donnie goes in for an awkward kiss... but Gretchen turns and denies him.

Donnie turns away, embarrassed.

DONNIE

That's alright... I understand.

GRETCHEN

(embarrassed)

No... Donnie, wait. I've never...

DONNIE

I always wanted it to be at a time when... when it reminds you how beautiful the world can be.

GRETCHEN

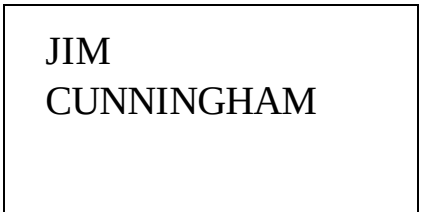
Yeah. And right now there's some fat guy over there watching us.

A man in a red jogging suit is standing there in the forest smoking a cigarette. He turns away... disappearing into the woods.

EXT. NEIGHBOURHOOD STREET - LATER THAT AFTERNOON (4 P.M.)

Donnie rides along the sidewalk... and skids to a stop, seeing a wallet lying there.

Donnie opens the wallet, looking at the ID. It reads:



42 POWDERHAM DRIVE
MIDDLESEX, VA 23113

FRANK (V.O.)
(echoing in Donnie's head)
Now you know where he lives.

Donnie looks over and sees that he is in front of Cunningham's Tudor mansion.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING (7:15 P.M.)

Donnie sits at the kitchen island with Elizabeth, carving a pumpkin.

ELIZABETH
So I hear you have a girlfriend.

DONNIE
Yeah.

ELIZABETH
What's her name?

DONNIE
You're not gonna tell Mom, are you?

ELIZABETH

(defensive)
Why would I tell Mom?

DONNIE

Because you tell Mom everything.

ELIZABETH

No I don't.
(long beat)
She worries about you.

DONNIE

Well, don't worry... I'm taking my medication.

ELIZABETH

It's not that. I mean mouthing off to your teachers. I'll admit... when Dad told me what you said to Ms. Farmer, I laughed my ass off.

DONNIE

I was just being honest.

ELIZABETH

Yeah... well, that's not the way the world works. If you keep being too honest, the world will eventually find a way to destroy you.

DONNIE

Her name is Gretchen.

ELIZABETH

That's a nice name.
(beat)

OK, let me see it.

Donnie turns the carved jack o' lantern around and we see that it looks remarkably like Frank.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - NIGHT (8 P.M.)

Rose and Eddie sit in front of Dr. Thurman.

ROSE

Thank you for seeing us... We... just felt that it was time to discuss...

DR. THURMAN

What I think is going on with your son.

ROSE

Well, you know about his past. And when you said to look for signs of aggression... He was recently suspended from school for insulting his gym teacher.

EDDIE

She deserved it.

DR. THURMAN

Rose... let me just lay out what I believe is happening here. Donnie's aggressive behaviour seems to stem from his increased detachment from

reality. His inability to cope with the forces in the world that he perceives to be threatening.

Rose smiles nervously.

DR. THURMAN (CONT'D)

Has your son ever told you about Frank?

ROSE

Come again?

DR. THURMAN

Frank... the giant bunny rabbit?

ROSE

Frank?

DR. THURMAN

Donnie is experiencing what is commonly called a daylight hallucination.

ROSE

You're telling me my son has an imaginary friend?

DR. THURMAN

He has described lengthy conversations... physical encounters with what I believe to be a manifestation of his subconscious mind.

Rose looks over at Eddie with an expression of panic.

ROSE

I... What can we do?

DR. THURMAN

I would like to put him through more hypnotherapy... and increase his medication.

Eddie looks at Rose... who nods in approval.

ROSE

If that's what you think is necessary.

DR. THURMAN

But let me remind you that this treatment is... experimental.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Donnie walks into the kitchen and removes a butcher's knife from a drawer.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - NIGHT

Donnie stands in front of the bathroom mirror... catatonic... looking at his reflection.

Frank stands behind him.

Suddenly, Donnie turns around with the butcher's knife and lunges at Frank with all of his weight.

The knife collides with Frank's invisible force field as if it were liquid steel. Donnie lunges repeatedly at Frank with psychotic rage... but the knife bounces off.

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INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - MORNING (10 A.M.)

The auditorium is packed with Middlesex mongrels. Jim Cunningham takes the stage.

JIM CUNNINGHAM

(shouting)

Good morning, mongrels!

AUDIENCE

(scattered voices)

Good morning...

JIM CUNNINGHAM

That's all the gusta you can musta? I said, "Good morning!"

AUDIENCE

(yelling louder)

Good MORNING!

JIM CUNNINGHAM

Now that's better... but I still sense some students out there... who are AFRAID... just to say GOOD MORNING!

AUDIENCE

(screaming)
GOOD MORNING!

JIM CUNNINGHAM
Are you AFRAID?

AUDIENCE
(screaming louder)
GOOD MORNING!

JIM CUNNINGHAM
Now that's what I like to hear!
(suddenly serious)
Because too many young men and women today are paralysed by their fears. They give in to their feelings of self-doubt... they surrender their bodies to the temptations of drugs, alcohol and premarital sex. Empty solutions. These are toxic chemicals... and disease-spreading behaviour.

A large screen lowers behind him.

JIM CUNNINGHAM (CONT'D)
I would like to tell you a story today about a young man whose life was destroyed by the instruments of fear. A young man searching for love... in all the wrong places.
(shaking his head tragically)
His name was Frank.

On the giant screen, an image slide appears of a young cartoon teenager whose eyes are whacked out on drugs. The title appears:

HIS NAME WAS FRANK.

Upon hearing the name Frank, Donnie falls into a paranoid trance.

Gretchen, who looks extremely bored, leans over to Donnie.

GRETCHEN

Let's get out of here.

Donnie ignores her. His eyes are locked on Jim Cunningham, who begins his rousing re-enactment of the sad, unfortunate downfall of Frank.

Within minutes, Jim Cunningham has the crowd laughing... enamoured of him with his cartoon slide show.

Note: during this sequence, the camera speed ramps to 4 bps.

INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NEXT (10:30 A.M.)

Donnie is in a trance.

DONNIE

We're moving through time.

GRETCHEN

What?

The huge screen rises upwards and Jim Cunningham takes questions from the crowd from portable mike stands in the back of the auditorium.

Several students get up and go to the mikes.

DORKY GIRL

Hi. Um... my stepsister... like... I sometimes worry that she eats too much.

OVERWEIGHT GIRL

(mortified; yelling at her sister from the crowd)

Shut up, Kim!

DORKY GIRL

I'm just trying to help you!

JIM CUNNINGHAM

There's no need to be embarrassed. Many times we eat because we are afraid to face the reality of our ego reflections. We shouldn't just look INTO the mirror. We should look THROUGH the mirror.

DORKY GIRL

Thanks.

Kitty Farmer runs out onto the stage and hands Jim Cunningham a bottle of water and a towel. She gives him the thumbs-up sign, and runs back offstage.

LANKY KID

Um... How can I decide what I want to be when I grow up?

JIM CUNNINGHAM

I think you should look deep within yourself... deep within your heart... and find what it is in the world that makes you feel LOVE. Just pure LOVE. And then go to that. In your studies... in your athletics... go towards love.

LANKY KID

Thank you.

Donnie gets up from his seat and goes to the mike.

LARRY RIESMAN

What can I do to learn how to fight?

JIM CUNNINGHAM

Violence is a product of fear. Those who love themselves enough should have no need to fight another person. Learn to truly love yourself... and the world will be yours.

LARRY RIESMAN

Okay.

Donnie steps up to the mike stand.

DONNIE

(furious)

How much are they paying you to be here?

JIM CUNNINGHAM

Excuse me? What's your name, son?

DONNIE

Gerald.

JIM CUNNINGHAM

Well, Gerald, I think you're afraid.

DONNIE

Well, Jim, I think you're full of shit!

There are rumblings from the faculty. Some laughter from the student body.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Are you telling us this crap because you want us to buy your book? Because I'll tell you something, that was some of the worst advice I've ever heard!

(to Dorky Girl)

If you want your sister to lose weight... tell her to get off the couch, stop eating Twinkies... and maybe go out for field hockey.

(to Lanky Kid)

You're never gonna know what you want to be when you grow up. Most of the time, nobody does. How about you, Jim?

(to Larry)

And you... Sick of some jerk shoving your head in a toilet? Then go lift some weights... take a karate lesson. And when he tries to do it again... kick him in the balls.

More rumblings from the faculty... Laughter from the students gets louder.

JIM CUNNINGHAM

(getting angry)

I think you are afraid to ask me for advice. I think that you are a very troubled... confused young man. I think you're searching for answers in all the wrong places.

DONNIE

(long beat)

Well, I think you're the fucking Anti-Christ.

The crowd is stirring. Students break out into applause. Principal Cole approaches Donnie and removes him from the auditorium.

Gretchen watches him go with a smile.

EXT. OLD GUN ROAD - AFTERNOON (3:30 P.M.)

Donnie and Gretchen walk down the wooded road.

DONNIE

(mumbling)

They suspended me for two days.

GRETCHEN

(stopping)

Are you okay?

DONNIE

(long beat)

I've been seeing stuff... a lot of really messed-up stuff.

(beat)

Do you know who Grandma Death is?

GRETCHEN

Who?

DONNIE

The old crazy woman who lives off Old Gun Road.

Donnie takes out the book by Roberta Sparrow.

GRETCHEN

Oh, yeah.

(taking the book)

"The Philosophy of Time Travel". What is this?

DONNIE

She wrote it.

(beat)

There are chapters in this book that describe the stuff I've been seeing. It can't just be a coincidence.

(beat)

Will you come see her with me?

EXT. OLD GUN ROAD - NEXT (3:45 P.M.)

Donnie and Gretchen stand at the end of Grandma Death's driveway.

Gretchen leads Donnie up to the front porch of the decrepit house. She then rings the doorbell. They wait for several moments... nothing happens.

Gretchen then goes and peers through a window.

DONNIE

I know she's here. She never leaves the house.

GRETCHEN

Maybe she's asleep.

They walk to the end of the driveway, and Donnie stops at the mailbox. He opens it... empty.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

(pointing at the house)

Donnie, look.

In an upstairs window of the house, the silhouette of Grandma Death peers down at them ominously.

INT. DONNIE'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

Donnie sits at his desk, sealing an envelope. The address reads:

MS. ROBERTA SPARROW
22 OLD GUN ROAD
MIDDLESEX, VA 23113

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INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - EVENING (6 P.M.)

Dr. Thurman looks at a diagram from Sparrow's boo. Donnie is pacing around her office.

DR. THURMAN

And they grow out of our stomachs?

DONNIE

It was just like she described them in her book. Like they were alive. The way that they looked... moved... smelled. They were like workers... assigned to each one of us.

(long beat, then distant)

I followed my spear... and I found something...

DR. THURMAN

What did you find?

Donnie is silent for a moment.

DONNIE

Nothing.

DR. THURMAN

Have you told Gretchen about the spears?

DONNIE

Yeah, but if I told her about the other stuff about Frank...

DR. THURMAN

Are you embarrassed by these things that you see?

DONNIE

You know... every week I come in here and I tell you stuff... and it's all embarrassing. (MORE)

DONNIE (CONT'D)

I tell you stuff that I don't tell anyone else... and you know what? It's your turn, Dr. Thurman. I'm not saying anything else until you tell me something embarrassing about yourself.

Donnie makes a "zipper lip" gesture.

DR. THURMAN

(long, stubborn beat)

I once had an extended sexual fantasy involving Mr. Rogers.

Donnie just stares at her.

DONNIE

Whoa.

(beat)

That's OK, Dr. Thurman, it's nothing to be

embarrassed about. I have sexual fantasies all the time too.

DR. THURMAN

I know.

DONNIE

I mean... Gretchen... She won't even let me kiss her. She says because it's our first kiss... she's, like, waiting for this big... moment or something. I just don't get it. I just want to get it over with so we can move on to the good stuff.

DR. THURMAN

The good stuff.

DONNIE

Yeah... you know...

(whispering)

Fucking.

DR. THURMAN

(cutting him off)

Have you ever made love, Donald?

Donnie looks at her... and we know the answer.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT (7:15 P.M.)

The entire family is having dinner. Donnie is lost in a trance.

SAMANTHA

Donnie, are you coming to my talent show tomorrow?

Donnie ignores her.

ROSE

He can't, Samantha. He's been suspended from after-school activities. Donnie... are you still with us?

(beat)

How was your therapy session tonight?

DONNIE

Fine. You know, Dr. Thurman isn't so bad a lady. I can tell her anything.

Rose appears surprised and then sad at this comment. She looks at Eddie, who just looks down at his plate of food.

EXT. PHYSICS CLASS - DAY (12 P.M.)

Donnie and Gretchen are at the front of the room, presenting their invention. Dr. Monnitoff presides.

DONNIE

So, we call them... IMGs.

GRETCHEN

Infant Memory Generators.

DONNIE

Yeah. So the idea is that... you buy these glasses for your infant, and they wear them at night when they sleep.

GRETCHEN

And inside these glasses are these slide photographs. And each photograph is of something peaceful... or beautiful. Whatever pictures the parent wants to put inside.

DR. MONNITOFF

What effect do you think this would have on an infant?

DONNIE

Well... the thing is, nobody remembers their infancy. And anyone who says they do is lying. We think that this would help develop memory earlier in life.

DR. MONNITOFF

Did you stop and think that maybe infants need darkness? That darkness is part of their natural development.

Seth Davis raises his hand.

SETH

What if the parents, like... put in photographs of Satan... pentagrams, dead people... stuff like that?

GRETCHEN

Is that what you'd show your kids?

SETH

I mean, didn't your dad, like, stab your mom?

Dr. Monnitoff looks over at Seth calmly.

SETH (CONT'D)

Get out.

Seth begins to walk out. Gretchen doesn't answer. There is only the 80 IQ grin... staring back at her face. The room is silent.

EXT. SCHOOL FRONT ENTRANCE - NEXT (2:15 P.M.)

Gretchen walks out the front door. Donnie comes chasing after her.

DONNIE

Gretchen! Gretchen... wait up!

She turns and faces him, tears in her eyes.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry.

They embrace... kissing for the first time.

EXT. BYRD THEATRE - MAGIC HOUR (5:30 P.M.)

The old-fashioned theater marquee reads:

HALLOWEEN FRIGHTMARE - THE EVIL DEAD / THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

Donnie and Gretchen approach the box office.

DONNIE

Two for "Evil Dead", please.

INT. BYRD THEATRE - NEXT

Donnie and Gretchen sit in the middle of the huge, empty theater.

"The Evil Dead" unfolds. They eat popcorn and watch silently. Donnie looks over and sees that Gretchen is asleep.

Donnie turns back to the movie... beginning to look ill.

FRANK

Feeling sick?

Donnie turns his head over and looks across Gretchen. Frank is sitting next to her.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I want to show you something.

DONNIE

You have to do something for me first.

FRANK

You have a request?

DONNIE

Yeah. Tell me why you're wearing that stupid bunny suit.

FRANK

Why are you wearing that stupid man suit?

DONNIE

Take it off. I want to see you.

After a moment, Frank slowly reaches up and removes the rabbit headpiece.

Donnie's eyes widen.

Underneath the headpiece is the human face of a handsome young man. His left eye does not exist, because it has imploded into the socket. There is blood oozing from the wound.

FRANK

Satisfied?

Donnie just stares at him.

DONNIE

What happened to your eye?

FRANK

I am so sorry.

DONNIE

Why do they call you Frank?

FRANK

It is the name of my father... and his father before me.

DONNIE

How much longer is this gonna last?

FRANK

You should already know that.

(beat)

Watch the movie, Donnie. I have something to show you.

Donnie looks at the screen.

On the screen, "The Evil Dead" morphs into a Time Portal.

FRANK (CONT'D)

There's a storm coming.

(beat)

Have you ever seen a Portal, Donnie?

Suddenly... the screen morphs into an image of a large Tudor house.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Burn it to the ground.

Donnie pulls out Jim Cunningham's wallet from his pocket.

Donnie contemplates his fate for several more moments, and then gets up and walks out.

EXT. BYRD THEATRE - NIGHT (6:30 P.M.)

Donnie walks slowly past the theatre marquee.

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT (7 P.M.)

On the stage, among blowing autumn leaves, Cherita Chen performs a strangely beautiful mime act to Symphony No. 3 by Henryk Gorecki.

When her act is finally over, the crowd is indifferent, with scattered applause and laughter. Ms. Pomeroy stands up and applauds enthusiastically.

Clearly affected by the laughter, Cherita walks offstage.

In the front row, the entire Darko family has assembled.

INT. AUDITORIUM BACKSTAGE - NIGHT (7:15 P.M.)

Kitty Farmer stands with the five-member dance team in a huddle.

MS. FARMER

Now girls... I want you to concentrate. Failure is not an option. And Bethany... if you feel the need to vomit up there. Just swallow it.

BETH

OK, Mom.

Jim Cunningham walks past them towards the stage. He stops and touches Samantha on the shoulder... smiling.

JIM CUNNINGHAM

Good luck out there.

She smiles nervously back at him. He exits onto the stage.

INT. AUDITORIUM STAGE - NEXT (7:20 P.M.)

JIM CUNNINGHAM

Thank you... Cherita Chen. That was Autumn Angel.

(clearing throat)

Next... it is my distinct pleasure to introduce to you... Emily Bates... Suzy Bailey... Samantha

Darko... Beth Farmer... and Joanie James. They are... SPARKLE MOTION!

The audience roars with applause as the lights dim.

The following montage alternates between the auditorium stage and Jim Cunningham's house.

The stage lights slowly raise as the opening beat of 'West End Girls' by the Pet Shop Boys begins.

Under the soft stage lights... Sparkle Motion unfolds.

Donnie approaches Jim Cunningham's house.

Sparkle Motion... in perfect synchronicity.

In the living room of the house... Donnie walks through, dousing gasoline all over the place with psychotic force. A trail of fire spreads.

A mystery woman emerges from the back wall of the auditorium.

A couch and curtains become engulfed in flames.

Middlesex girls are jumping up and down in the aisles.

Eddie and Rose are smiling ear to ear.

Elizabeth Darko is cracking up at the entire scene.

Kids are going bonkers in the aisles.

The mystery woman takes off her glasses.

Slow motion: fire engulfs a deer taxidermy.

Ms. Pomeroy gets into the groove.

The parents are now on their feet.

The crowd roars even louder.

Slow motion: Sparkle Motion stands triumphant.

Slow motion: Donnie stands before a wall of flames.

EXT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT (8 P.M.)

Cherita sits alone in the courtyard at the base of the mongrel statue... defeated and alone.

INT. BYRD THEATRE - NIGHT (9 P.M.)

Donnie walks into the theatre and sits next to Gretchen, who is asleep. As the credits to the film roll, Donnie wakes her.

GRETCHEN

(disoriented)

What? How long was I asleep?

DONNIE

The whole movie. Let's go.

INT. JIM CUNNINGHAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT (9:45 P.M.)

Firemen walk through the charred room shining flashlight.

A Fireman shines his flashlight onto a mysterious door with smoke emerging from it.

He kicks the door in... and shines the flashlight into the dark hole.

EXT. CARPATHIAN RIDGE - SUNRISE (5 A.M.)

Donnie and Gretchen lie awake on a pile of blankets... staring out into the abyssal canyon.

Helicopter shot: we swoop down over Carpathian Ridge... past Donnie and Gretchen... over the canyon and the endless expanse of evergreen forest.

OCTOBER 23 1988

EXT. DARKO HOUSE BACKYARD / PATIO - MORNING (11 A.M.)

Donnie and Eddie are in the backyard raking leaves onto a giant sheet.

DONNIE

I know everyone thinks I'm a nutcase. I've been getting a lot of weird looks from people lately.

They rake in silence for a moment.

EDDIE

(angry)

Who's been giving you weird looks?

DONNIE

A lot of people. Teachers. Younger kids. It's like they're afraid of me for some reason.

(beat)

But that's OK... because I know I deserve it.

Eddie stops raking.

EDDIE

You're my only son...

DONNIE

I know, Dad.

EDDIE

I know I'm not the best... communicator.

(beat)

But whatever happens in your life... whatever obstacles you come up against... you just say... and do whatever is in your heart. You be honest... and tell the truth... even if they look at you funny... and they will. They'll tell you that you're wrong. They'll call you a fool.

(beat)

But what you've got to understand, son, is that almost all of those people are full of bullshit... and they're scared of people like you. Because you're smarter than all of them.

Donnie smiles at his father.

INT. DONNIE'S ROOM - AFTERNOON (1 P.M.)

Donnie sits on his bed and stares at the calendar on his wall. Each day is marked with an X.

He takes his pills from his nightstand... and downs three.

There are noises coming from downstairs.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - AFTERNOON

Donnie comes downstairs to see Elizabeth glued to the TV.

ELIZABETH

Oh my God, that's him. That's the guy from last night.

On the television: a Newscaster stands in front of the charred heap of what was once a large suburban house. Firefighters mill about behind her.

NEWSCASTER

As firefighters continue their investigation, arson has not been ruled out as a cause of the fire, particularly because of the shocking discovery made earlier today among the burned ruins. In the basement of the house, authorities have discovered what has been described as a kiddie-porn dungeon.

Policemen emerge from the basement with several large boxes of evidence.

NEWSCASTER (CONT'D)

Cunningham, who has become a recent celebrity for his motivational books, audio tapes and videos, ducked his head from cameras when he was arrested at the Sarasota Heights Golf Club this morning. In a

vicious statement, Cunning Visions executive Linda Connie attacked the Middlesex Fire Department... claiming a vast conspiracy.

Donnie stares at the television... speechless, horrified. On the TV, Jim Cunningham hides his face from the camera.

ELIZABETH

Oh my God. Dad played golf with that guy.

Donnie says nothing, turns around... and walks upstairs.

INT. PHYSICS CLASS - DAY (2 P.M.)

Donnie and Dr. Monnitoff are having another in-depth conversation.

DR. MONNITOFF

Each vessel travels along a vector path through space-time... along its centre of gravity.

DONNIE

(to himself)

Like a spear.

DR. MONNITOFF

Beg pardon?

DONNIE

Like a spear that comes out of your stomach?

DR. MONNITOFF

Uhh... sure. And in order for the vessel to travel through time it must find the portal, in this case the wormhole, or some unforeseen portal that lies undiscovered.

DONNIE

Could these wormholes appear in nature?

DR. MONNITOFF

That... is highly unlikely. You're talking about an act of God.

DONNIE

If God controls time... then all time is pre-decided. Then every living thing travels along a set path.

DR. MONNITOFF

I'm not following you.

DONNIE

If you could see your path or channel growing out of your stomach, you could see into the future. And that's a form of time travel, right?

DR. MONNITOFF

You are contradicting yourself, Donnie. If we could see our destines manifest themselves visually... then we would be given the choice to betray our chosen destinies. The very fact that this choice exists... would mean that all pre-formed destiny would end.

DONNIE

Not if you chose to stay within God's channel...

DR. MONNITOFF

(cutting him off)

Donnie, I'm afraid I can't continue this conversation. I could lose my job.

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE - AFTERNOON (2:30 P.M.)

Ms. Pomeroy sits across from Dr. Monnitoff. They both grade papers silently.

Dr. Monnitoff stares at her for a long moment.

DR. MONNITOFF

(incredulous)

Donnie... Darko.

She stares at him for a while, haunted by something.

INT. PRINCIPAL COLE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON (3 P.M.)

Ms. Pomeroy sits across from Principal Cole.

PRINCIPAL COLE

I'm sorry, Karen, this is a specialised school. We don't think the methods you've undertaken here are appropriate.

MS. POMEROY

"Appropriate".

(trying to contain her anger)

With all due respect, sir, what specifically about my methods do you find inappropriate?

Principal Cole stares at her for a moment.

PRINCIPAL COLE

I don't have to get myself into a debate about this, Karen, I believe I have made myself clear.

MS. POMEROY

You call this... clarity? I don't think you have a clue what it's really like to communicate with these kids. You don't think that they can smell your bullshit from a mile away? Every day that goes by... that we fail to... inspire them... is another moment that we all lose. And we are losing them to apathy, and this... prescribed nonsense. They are slipping away...

PRINCIPAL COLE

I am sorry that you have failed. Now if you'll excuse me, I have another appointment. You can finish out the week.

INT. SCHOOL OFFICE / TEACHER'S LOUNGE - NEXT (3:15 P.M.)

Ms. Pomeroy steps out from Principal Cole's office. She sees Kitty Farmer and the Sparkle Motion girls milling about. The mystery woman is there as well.

Ms. Pomeroy glares at Kitty Farmer before leaving.

EXT. MIDDLESEX RIDGE SCHOOL - NEXT (3:30 P.M.)

Ms. Pomeroy steps outside through an emergency exit. She stares out at the beautiful forest. Her eyes are filled with tears.

MS. POMEROY

FUUUUUUUCKKKKKK!!!!!

Hearing the scream from the distance, we see Cherita Chen turn her head in shock as she walks alone along the edge of the school building, eating her lunch.

She and Ms. Pomeroy share a moment of eye contact before she turns and heads back into the school.

INT. MAIN SCHOOL HALLWAY - NEXT (3:45 P.M.)

Ms. Pomeroy walks slowly through the hallway, wiping tears from her face.

PRINCIPAL COLE

(over the intercom)

Good afternoon. It is my great pleasure to announce that the Middlesex Middle School dance team has been invited to perform on Ed McMahon's Star Search '88 in Los Angeles, California...

INT. PRINCIPAL COLE'S OFFIC - NEXT (3:45 P.M.)

The Sparkle Motion girls squeal with excitement... jumping up and down. Kitty Farmer pumps her fist in victory.

Suddenly... Linda Connie bursts into the office, grabbing Kitty by the arm. The teacher holds up a newspaper... where there is a headline that reads:

JIM CUNNINGHAM CHARGED.

Kitty's facial expression goes from elation to horror.

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - MORNING (8:30 P.M.)

The classroom is dark. The students watch "Watership Down", the movie.

Donnie is asleep. Gretchen stares at him. Ms. Pomeroy stares at Gretchen.

Suddenly, she turns on the lights, turning off the TV. Donnie wakes up... with dark circles under his eyes.

MS. POMEROY

And when the other rabbits hear of Fiver's vision, do they believe him?

(cough)

It could be the death of an entire way of life, the end of an era.

DONNIE

Why should we care?

MS. POMEROY

Because the rabbits are us, Donnie.

DONNIE

Why should I mourn for a rabbit like it was a human?

MS. POMEROY

Is the death of one species less tragic than another?

DONNIE

Of course. A rabbit is not like us. It has no history books... it has no knowledge of sorrow or regret. I like bunnies and all. They're cute... and they're horny. And if you're cute and horny... then you're probably happy that you don't know who you are... or why you're even alive. But the only thing I've known rabbits to do is have sex as many times as possible before they die.

He looks over at Gretchen, who looks angry at this.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

There's no point in crying for a dead rabbit... who never feared death to begin with.

The class is silent for a moment.

GRETCHEN

You're wrong.

(beat)

You're wrong about these rabbits. These rabbits can talk. They are the product of the authors imagination. And he cares for them. So we care for them too. We care that their home has been destroyed... and that their lives are in danger. Otherwise... we've missed the point.

MS. POMEROY

But aren't we forgetting the miracle of storytelling? The dea ex machina. The god machine. That is how the rabbits are saved.

Gretchen looks across the room at Donnie with a disdainful expression.

INT. MAIN SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER (9 A.M.)

Donnie approaches Gretchen at her locker.

DONNIE

You want to skip fourth period and go to the Ridge?

GRETCHEN

(angry)

What's wrong with you?

DONNIE

What do you mean?

She turns and walks off, leaving Donnie broken and dejected.

INT. DONNIE'S ROOM - NIGHT (6:30 P.M.)

Donnie sits at his desk looking at an intricate drawing of a cloud formation. On it he has written:

THE PORTAL.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT (7 P.M.)

Rose and Eddie are in the kitchen. He is getting ready for a business trip.

Samantha is jumping up and down. Elizabeth is jumping up and down, dancing with her.

Donnie looks into the kitchen from the foyer, catching his family in a serene, contented moment of happiness. A moment that he chooses not to interrupt.

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INT. / EXT. FOYER / FRONT PORCH - DAY (3 P.M.)

Doorbell rings. Rose answers the door.

Kitty Farmer is there on the front porch. She is wearing a T-shirt that reads: GOD IS AWESOME!

MS. FARMER

Rose.

ROSE

Kitty...

MS. FARMER

Rose, we have a crisis.

(beat)

I am sure that you are aware of the horrible allegations against Jim Cunningham.

ROSE

Yes, I saw the news. Something about a kiddie-porn dungeon.

MS. FARMER

(holding up her hand)

Please! Don't say those words.

(shaking her head)

Well... as you can see... many of us are devastated by this news. This is obviously some kind of conspiracy meant to destroy an innocent man. And I have taken it upon myself to spearhead the Jim Cunningham defence campaign. But unfortunately my civic duties have created a conflict of interest... which involves you.

ROSE

Beg pardon?

MS. FARMER

Rose... I have to appear at his arraignment tomorrow morning. And as you know, the girls also leave for Los Angeles tomorrow morning. Now, as their coach... I was the obvious choice to chaperone them on the trip.

ROSE

But now you can't go.

MS. FARMER

Yes. And believe me, of all the other mothers I would never dream of asking you, given the predicament with your son. But none of the other mothers are able to go.

ROSE

Oh, Kitty, I don't know. This is so last-minute... Eddie is in New York...

MS. FARMER

Rose... I don't know if you realise how great an opportunity this is for our daughters. This has been

a dream of ours for a long time.

(beat)

Sometimes I doubt your commitment to Sparkle Motion.

INT. DONNIE'S ROOM - NIGHT (7 P.M.)

Rose is standing in Donnie's room alone. She stares at a drawing of Frank that he has tacked onto his bulletin board.

Donnie appears in the doorway. Rose jumps.

DONNIE

I feel like... I'm approaching something horrible.

Donnie walks over and sits on his bed. Rose goes and sits next to him.

ROSE

I have to take the girls to Los Angeles tomorrow.

DONNIE

Do you get to meet Ed?

ROSE

If I'm lucky.

(beat)

So... I won't be back until the first. Your dad will be back on Sunday, so I've put Elizabeth in charge until then. She has the car... so she can drive you to your therapy tomorrow.

DONNIE

How does it feel to have a wacko for a son?

ROSE

(embracing him)

It feels wonderful.

EXT. DARKO HOUSE DRIVEWAY - MORNING (10 A.M.)

Rose brings her luggage out to the airport van. Mystery Woman loads Beth Farmer into the van.

Donnie sits on the back-porch steps, watching everyone silently. Elizabeth gives Samantha a hug.

ELIZABETH

You're gonna win. I know it.

SAMANTHA

So do I.

(to Donnie)

Bye, Donnie.

Donnie waves goodbye.

ROSE

Here are the keys to the Taurus. There's plenty of groceries in the fridge. And I left money on the kitchen table. And don't forget...

ELIZABETH

Don't worry, Mom. Just go, you'll miss your flight.

Rose turns... wanting to say goodbye to Donnie, but not knowing how. She smiles and waves goodbye.

Donnie waves back.

Rose turns and goes to the van... handing the driver her last bag.

DONNIE

Mom...

Donnie stands up and reluctantly approaches from the porch.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

There's nothing broken... in my brain.

Rose stands there for a moment, looking at her only son.

SAMANTHA

Come on, Mom!

ROSE

(to Donnie, holding back tears)

I know.

She gets into the van, as Donnie and Elizabeth watch them drive off.

INT. SCHOOL MAIN HALLWAY - AFTERNOON (3 P.M.)

Donnie walks up to Gretchen, who stands at her locker with several other girls. The girls whisper to each other as he approaches.

DONNIE

Will you please talk to me?

GRETCHEN

Not now, Donnie. It isn't a good time.

DONNIE

Then when? I have to talk to you.

Gretchen walks away, looking back at him with apologetic eyes.

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - MOMENTS LATER (3:15 P.M.)

Donnie walks alone through the hallways... lost.

He stumbles upon Ms. Pomeroy's room. She sits behind her desk... which has been packed up into a cardboard box.

DONNIE

(knocking on the door)

Ms. Pomeroy... what's going on?

MS. POMEROY

Donnie... it's Friday. Shouldn't you be off with your friends, scaring old people?

DONNIE

Where are you going?

MS. POMEROY

I don't know. That's a good question... but suffice to say that I am no longer your English teacher. They fired me.

DONNIE

That's bullshit. You're a good teacher.

MS. POMEROY

Thank you, Donnie. And you're a good student. Lazy... but a good student. Unlike most of the others, you question Mom and Dad's rules.

DONNIE

What do I tell the rest of the class when they ask about you?

MS. POMEROY

(long beat)

Tell them that everything is going to be just fine.

(beat)

It is up to the children to save themselves these days. Because the parents... they don't have a clue.

Donnie looks at the blackboard. On it she has written in perfect penmanship: "Cellar Door".

DONNIE

What's "Cellar Door"?

MS. POMEROY

(spaced out)

A famous linguist once said... that of all the phrases in the English language, of all the endless combinations of words in all of history... that "Cellar Door" is the most beautiful.

She is silent for a moment.

DONNIE

Cellar door.

MS. POMEROY

Sometimes it's the only thing that keeps us going.

She takes the box and crosses the room towards Donnie.

MS. POMEROY (CONT'D)

So... will Donnie find his Cellar Door?

DONNIE

I think I already have.

(beat)

But now she won't even talk to me.

MS. POMEROY

Then go find her, Donnie. Don't let her get away.

(stopping at the door)

She was right about the rabbits. Go.

INT. MAIN HALLWAY - NEXT (3:15. P.M.)

And with that... Ms. Pomeroy turns and walks down the hallway with her career in a cardboard box... heading towards the bright Friday afternoon sunlight.

Donnie walks back down the hallway... lost in his own introspection.

Across the way... at her locker... as Cherita Chen. Donnie approaches her slowly like a cat.

She turns from her locker... and they make eye contact.

She looks at him warily, frightened. A book falls from her arms onto the floor.

Written in large letters on the brown book cover is his name.

DONNIE DARKO.

He comes face to face with her, grabs her earmuffs with both hands, and touches his forehead to hers as if he were going to kiss her.

DONNIE

(long beat)

I promise that one day things will get better for you.

Cherita holds still for a moment, trembling, and then jerks back from him. Her earmuffs come off in his hands.

She backs away from him slowly. A single tear rolls down her cheek.

CHERITA

Chut... up!

She then turns and runs down the hall... disappearing from sight.

EXT. OLD GUN ROAD - AFTERNOON (4 P.M.)

Donnie walks by himself... thinking... wearing Cherita's earmuffs.

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INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY (1:30 P.M.)

Donnie is under hypnosis.

DR. THURMAN

And when I clap my hands together twice, you will wake up. Do you understand?

DONNIE

Yes.

DR. THURMAN

So, your parents... why did you disappoint them?

DONNIE

I... I was playing with fire.

DR. THURMAN

Is it Frank who wants you to destroy the world, to set the world on fire?

Donnie doesn't answer.

DONNIE

People get hurt.

DR. THURMAN

But it was an accident. The house was under construction.

DONNIE

People get hurt. I don't want to hurt anyone.

DR. THURMAN

But you were punished.

DONNIE

Yes. I went to jail.

DR. THURMAN

Do you wish that you were punished by your parents instead?

DONNIE

They... didn't buy me what I wanted for Christmas that year.

DR. THURMAN

What did you want for Christmas that year?

DONNIE

Hungry Hungry Hippos.

DR. THURMAN

How did you feel... being denied those Hungry Hungry Hippos?

DONNIE

Regret.

DR. THURMAN

What else makes you feel regret?

DONNIE

That I did it again.

DR. THURMAN

(alarmed)

You've done it again?

DONNIE

Yes. I flooded my school... and I burned down that pervert's house. I think I only have a few days left... before they catch me.

DR. THURMAN

Why did you do these things, Donnie? Did Frank tell you to commit these crimes?

He does not respond.

DONNIE

I have to obey him... because he saved my life. He controls me and I have to obey him or I'll be left all alone... and I'll never figure out what all of this means...

DR. THURMAN

If God exists?

DONNIE

I think now that he might...

DR. THURMAN

Why?

DONNIE

Because I'm so horny.

DR. THURMAN

God exists because you're horny.

DONNIE

I think so. I think that's one of the clues. It's a clue that tells us... to keep going.

DR. THURMAN

Where are we going?

No answer.

DR. THURMAN (CONT'D)

Where are we going, Donald?

DONNIE

I have the power to build a time machine.

DR. THURMAN

How is that possible?

DONNIE

Grandma Death will teach me how. Soon.

DR. THURMAN

Then how is time travel possible?

DONNIE

It would have to be God's portal. They will lead me to it. Then I will go back in time... and I won't feel regret anymore.

DR. THURMAN

When will this happen?

DONNIE

Soon. Time is almost up.

Donnie gets up on his feet, staggering around the room. He looks frightened... childlike.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

It has to happen soon, it has to happen soon.

Dr. Thurman gets up and tries to control Donnie... following him around the room.

DR. THURMAN

What is going to happen?

DONNIE

(freaking out)

Frank is going to kill.

DR. THURMAN

Who is he going to kill?

Dr. Thurman grabs him, trying to get him under control in an awkward embrace.

DR. THURMAN (CONT'D)

Who is he going to kill?

Donnie stares across the office like a frightened child... as the room becomes white with artificial light.

Frank is there in the office... staring back at him.

DONNIE

(freaking out)

I can see him right now!

DR. THURMAN

Where is he, Donald?

DONNIE

He's right there... He can read my mind and he'll show me the way out of this. The sky is going to open up... and then He will reveal himself to me.

DR. THURMAN

If the sky were to suddenly open up... there would be no law... there would be no rule. There would only be you and your memories... the choices you've made and the people you've touched. The life that has been carved out from your subconscious is the only evidence by which you will be judged... by which you must judge yourself. Because when this

world ends, there will only be you and him... and no one else.

DONNIE

It's too late. I've already ruined my life.

DR. THURMAN

You will survive this... Donald. I promise you that you will survive. You must let me help you.

(beat)

And when I clap my hands together, you will wake up.

She claps her hands together twice... and Donnie snaps out of his trance.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON (2 P.M.)

Donnie, calmed down and putting his jacket on, walks slowly to the doorway.

Dr. Thurman stands looking out the window.

DR. THURMAN

Donald?

Donnie turns back and faces her. Beat.

DR. THURMAN (CONT'D)

Your medication. They're placebos. Just pills made out of water.

DONNIE

Thank you.

DR. THURMAN

Donald, an atheist is someone who denies altogether the existence of a God. You are an agnostic. An agnostic is someone who believes that there can be no proof of the existence of God... but does not deny the possibility that God exists.

DONNIE

Goodbye, Dr. Thurman.

DR. THURMAN

Goodbye, Donald.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Donnie walks into the kitchen, where Elizabeth is sitting at the table.

ELIZABETH

(in shock)

I got in. I'm going to Harvard.

DONNIE

Congratulations.

Donnie sits down across from her.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Mom and Dad won't be back until Sunday night. It's Halloween Carnival. We should throw a party. We could totally get away with it.

ELIZABETH

(long beat)

Okay, but it has to be a small one.

DONNIE

Everything is going to be just fine.

EXT. DARKO HOUSE - NIGHT (9 P.M.)

Neighbourhood kids are trick-or-treating. The man in the red jogging suit shines a flashlight towards the house.

There are at least two dozen cars parked in front... and somebody is already throwing toilet paper in the trees.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT (9:30 P.M.)

The doorbell rings. Donnie answers the door... only to find Sean and Ronald dressed in black with monster masks. They are both carrying backpacks.

Donnie is dressed in a black skeleton suit, and his face is painted white like a skull.

SEAN

We got eggs, water balloons, and a dozen rolls of toilet paper.

RONALD

I stole four beers from my dad.

DONNIE

There's a keg here.

SEAN

Only pussies drink keg beer.

They go back into the house towards the kitchen. There are at least forty people, already quite wasted, many carrying their own twelve-packs of beer under their arms.

Almost everyone is wearing a costume. Donnie and his friends weave through the crowd toward the patio.

EXT. BACKYARD / PATIO - NEXT

Donnie and his friends watching the party unfold.

The party grows larger.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dr. Thurman paces around her office with the phone to her ear.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

The phone is ringing. The answering machine picks up.

INT. FOYER - LATER ON (11 P.M.)

The doorbell rings... and once again Donnie is the one to answer it. To his surprise... it is Gretchen standing on his front porch.

GRETCHEN

(very upset)

Hey.

DONNIE

Hey. You OK?

GRETCHEN

(walking inside)

My mom is gone.

DONNIE

Where is she?

GRETCHEN

(close to tears)

I don't know. She didn't leave a note.

The house is all messed up.

DONNIE

But you're OK?

She nods yes.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Did you call the cops?

GRETCHEN

Yeah, they told me to get out of the house.

Donnie takes Gretchen into the hallway and gives her a hug.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

I'm so scared... I just keep thinking that something awful has happened. It's my fucking stepdad. I know it.

DONNIE

(embraces her)

It's safe here.

Donnie takes Gretchen upstairs. We reveal Elizabeth watching them go.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NEXT

Elizabeth walks over to a friend.

ELIZABETH

(yelling over the music)

Have you seen Frank?

FRIEND

No. I think they said they were going on a beer run.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NEXT (11:15 P.M.)

Donnie and Gretchen sit on the bed. Gretchen takes a sip of beer.

GRETCHEN

Some people are just born with tragedy in their blood.

He kisses her. He then pulls back.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

What?

DONNIE

There's something you have to know, Gretchen.

(beat)

Everything is going to be just fine.

They lie down together... silently listening to the party below.

The phone is ringing. The answering machine picks up.

ROSE

(on the answering machine)

If you're there, please pick up.

(beat)

Oh well... there's good news. The girls... they got three and a half stars... and they get to come back for the quarter-finals.

INT. LAX TERMINAL - NIGHT (9 P.M. PST)

Rose stands at a payphone while the Sparkle Motion girls wait at the terminal.

SAMANTHA

Semi-finals, Mom!

ROSE

Sorry... semi-finals. Anyway... we're taking the red-eye back tonight and we should arrive around six a.m. I hope everything is alright. Bye.

OCTOBER 30 1988

INT. FOYER - NIGHT (12 A.M.)

We move towards the grandfather clock and see the minute hand reach midnight.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT (12:30 A.M.)

Donnie and Gretchen walk downstairs. They kiss, and she goes towards the family room.

Donnie walks towards the kitchen, but then doubles over against the wall in pain.

Suddenly... the room blows out with a strobe of white light... as costumed teenagers and their vector spears intersect in a shimmering maze of chaos. Donnie slowly follows his spear as it leads him through the crowd... directly towards the refrigerator.

Donnie stares blankly at what he sees... scrawled in magic marker on the memo board.

It reads: FRANK WAS HERE... WENT TO GET BEER!!

Donnie stares at the board for several moment... he then turns his head and sees a teenager with a Ronald Reagan mask walk by.

He then sees another spear come towards him. Gretchen rounds the corner, coming in from the family room.

Donnie falls to his knees and puts his face inside the end of Gretchen's spear. We see his P.O.V. - an abyssal tunnel of light.

DONNIE

Come with me.

GRETCHEN

Where are we going?

He grabs her and pulls her out the back of the kitchen into the back yard. Ronald and Sean follow.

EXT. BACKYARD / PATIO - NEXT

They move through the backyard.

GRETCHEN

Donnie, what's going on!

She stops him.

DONNIE

Time is running out. We have to go see Grandma Death. We have to talk to her.

GRETCHEN

Why? Is this about the book?

DONNIE

No. Frank.

GRETCHEN
Who's Frank?

Ronald and Sean approach.

SEAN
Donnie? Where are we going?

Donnie looks at Gretchen... This is it.

DONNIE
She knows. I know she knows.

EXT. NEIGHBOURHOOD STREET - NIGHT (1:15 A.M.)

The group of hour ride their bikes down the street.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT (1:45 A.M.)

They ride their bikes through the forest.

EXT. GRANDMA DEATH'S HOUSE - NIGHT (1:30 A.M.)

They stand in front of the dark house. It is pitch-black. No lights anywhere.

SEAN

There's nobody here... Just forget it.

Then... there is a clanking noise from somewhere around the side of the house. Everyone hears it.

Donnie looks towards the lower front of the house where there is a cellar door.

GRETCHEN

Is that a cellar door?

DONNIE

(his eyes widen)

Yeah...

The cellar door is ajar... and there is a dim light coming out from inside.

RONALD

Don't open it, Donnie. Let's just leave.

INT. GRANDMA DEATH'S CELLAR - NEXT

Donnie and Gretchen open the door to the cellar... and descend down into a murky pit with a stone floor.

Inside... the room is quite large... filled with row after row of boxes, paintings, antique furniture and chandeliers. There is even an ancient piano in the back.

Gretchen slowly reaches her hand out and places her finger on the deepest piano key.

Suddenly a figure emerges from the shadows and slams Donnie into the wall. He then grabs Gretchen by placing an arm around her neck with a butcher's knife.

It is Ricky Danforth. Seth comes out from another corner... also brandishing a butcher's knife. Both have pantyhose pulled over their heads.

RICKY

Get the fuck out! Now! Ricky drags Gretchen out. Seth drags Donnie out.

EXT. GRANDMA DEATH'S HOUSE - NEXT

The four of them come bursting out of the cellar.

Seth holds Donnie's arms down with his knees and places the butcher's knife against his throat.

Ricky throws Gretchen down hard onto the shoulder of Old Gun Road. She lets out a gasp of pain as her head hits the gravel.

RICKY

Motherfuckers!

SETH

I have... a bigger knife now.

Sean and Ronald watch... dumbfounded, backing away.

Seth just stares down at Donnie with his dead eyes... pushing the knife down harder, cutting off Donnie's air supply.

SEAN

Hey... there's someone coming! Look, there's a car coming!

Seth slowly turns his head and sees... far down Old Gun Road... approaching headlights.

DONNIE

(barely audible whisper)

Deus ex machina...

SETH

What did you say?

DONNIE

Our saviour...

The headlights are getting close.

RICKY

They called the fuckin' cops!

Gretchen struggles to breathe on the shoulder of the road... the wind knocked out of her, semi-conscious.

SETH

That's no cop...

The headlights are getting close.

GRETCHEN

(in a hoarse whisper)

Donnie...

Even closer...

DONNIE

You better run.

RICKY

Forget it... let's go!

Seth doesn't move... He just stares down at Donnie.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Come on! Let's go!

SETH

You're dead, Donnie Darko.

Seth gets up and runs off with Ricky into the forest... just as the approaching car crests the top of Old Gun Road at breakneck speed.

Suddenly, in the bright glow of the car's headlights... is the silhouette of Grandma Death... standing in the middle of the road. In her right hand she is clutching a letter.

Donnie's letter.

GRETCHEN

Donnie...

The car swerves left, barely missing Grandma Death.

The Pontiac tries to brake hard... but the wheels lock... and it goes skidding onto the shoulder.

Gretchen raises her head from the gravel... into bright headlight beams.

The Trans-Am goes barrelling over her like a speed-bump... and her limp body rolls off into the grassy ditch.

The Trans-Am skids off into the grass and collides head-on with the crumbling stone chimney... which explodes into the crumpled hood of the car... as it eventually comes to a stop in a fury of smoke.

Donnie staggers to his feet... regaining his breath. He runs over to Gretchen and kneels down next to her.

DONNIE

Gretchen... wake up. Wake up.

Her neck is broken. She has no pulse.

The passenger door to the Trans-Am opens, and a passenger in a clown costume gets out.

The driver's side door opens and the driver gets out.

He is wearing a rabbit suit. A Halloween costume.

He is holding the grotesque rabbit helmet in his hand.

It is Frank.

PASSENGER

Frank... what'd you do... what'd you do!

Frank approaches Donnie... who raises his head from Gretchen to see him for the first time... face to face... with an expression of shocked horror.

PASSENGER (CONT'D)

She's dead. You killed her, Frank!

Frank is in shock.

FRANK

She's dead.

Donnie slowly nods his head. Sean and Ronald approach him slowly. Grandma Death looms behind them.

FRANK (CONT'D)

What the fuck. Look at my fucking car!

PASSENGER

Let's get out of here. Let's get out of here, Frank!

FRANK

What were you stupid fucks doing in the middle of the road?

DONNIE

Waiting for you.

Donnie raises the gun from his father's closet with his right hand, and to his own surprise, he pulls the trigger.

Frank's left eye implodes as the bullet passes through his head. His body falls limply to the ground.

PASSENGER

Holy shit...

The Passenger turns and runs off into the woods.

RONALD

What'd you do, Donnie? What'd you do!

DONNIE

(very calm)

Go home. Go home and tell your parents that everything is going to be just fine.

After contemplation of the recent events... Sean and Ronald turn and run off in the opposite direction.

Donnie is left alone... with the dead bodies.

He turns and stares at Grandma Death... who is calmly standing there... with his letter in her hand.

GRANDMA DEATH

A storm is coming.

(beat)

You must hurry.

Donnie is still in shock.

EXT. NEIGHBOURHOOD STREET - EARLY MORNING (4:30 A.M.)

Donnie carries Gretchen home.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NEXT

Donnie looks down at Elizabeth asleep on the couch. He then leans down and gives her a kiss on the forehead.

EXT. DARKO HOUSE DRIVEWAY - NEXT

Donnie walks out to the Taurus, then stops and looks up at the sky.

EXT. DARKO HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NEXT

The Time Portal begins to form above the house.

Donnie touches his stomach... feeling sick once again.

Donnie then steps into the car, where Gretchen sits in the passenger seat. He turns on the engine and peels out of the driveway.

INT. FORD TAURUS - EARLY MORNING

Donnie drives the Taurus up Carpathian Ridge.

EXT. CARPATHIAN RIDGE - EARLY MORNING (5:30 A.M.)

Donnie sits on the roof of the Taurus looking out.

He smiles, lighting a cigarette.

DONNIE

28 days, 6 hours, 42 minutes, 12 seconds. We're almost home.

EXT. SKY - NEXT

We see the Time Portal in the distance, forming.

INT. FLIGHT 2806 - DAWN (6 A.M.)

Samantha Darko is fast asleep. Her head rests on Rose's shoulder. She looks out of the window at the rising sun.

EXT. DARKO HOUSE - DAWN

The Portal continues to form above the Darko house.

Police cars pull up in front of the house.

EXT. CARPATHIAN RIDGE - DAWN

Donnie continues to stare out at the canyon.

EXT. SKY - NEXT

We see the Time Portal once again.

INT. FORD TAURUS - NEXT

Donnie steps off the hood and gets into the car.

He takes Gretchen's hand.

INT. FLIGHT 2806 - NEXT

On the plane, Rose looks out of the window as the jet wing explodes (audio only... we don't see it). She screams out as the cabin shakes violently.

EXT. DARKO HOUSE - DAWN

The Time Portal continues to form over the house.

EXT. SKY - NEXT

The left jet engine from Flight 2806 falls downward through the sky. Beneath it, the Portal forms itself.

EXT. SKY - NEXT

The falling jet engine approaches the hexagonal plate of light which accelerates downwards... forming a tunnel with walls made of swirling liquid marble.

The jet engine passes into the hexagonal plate.

INT. / EXT. VARIOUS

In a series of inter-velometer time-lapse shots... the entire suburban landscape retreats backward in a fury of speed.

Shot 1: a time-lapse of the mongrel statue.

Shot 2: a time-lapse of the main school hallway.

Shot 3: a time-lapse of the main school building.

Shot 4: a time-lapse of neighbourhood street /Darko house.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

We Steadicam up the stairs.

INT. DONNIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

We move towards Donnie's empty bed.

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INT. VARIOUS BEDROOMS - NIGHT (1:30 A.M.)

Dr. Thurman wakes up.

Jim Cunningham wakes up... sobbing.

Kitty Farmer wakes up... coming to a horrible realisation.

Karen Pomeroy and Dr. Monnitoff wake up together.

Cherita Chen wakes up.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT (1:30 A.M.)

The jet engine falls silently through the night down towards the Darko house... having travelled back in time.

INT. DONNIE'S ROOM - NEXT

Donnie wakes up. He is laughing hysterically.

The engine crashes through his ceiling... engulfing the room.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NEXT

Eddie jumps up from the La-Z Boy... startled awake by the impact.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NEXT

Rose sits up in bed, hearing the crash.

ROSE
Eddie?

INT. FOYER - NEXT

Elizabeth leans against the wall, screaming.

INT. DONNIE'S ROOM - NEXT

The mammoth jet engine has plummeted all the way down through the house, creating a cavernous hole that splits Donnie's room in half. The smoke from the wreckage begins to clear.

Above the engine is Donnie... impaled through the stomach by a wooden beam that was once part of the floor beneath his bed. There is blood

gushing from his mouth, as his face is contorted into an expression that could almost be a smile.

EXT. NEIGHBOURHOOD STREET - MORNING (11 A.M.)

The same disaster scene as before... only more media, more neighbours, and a Coroner. People stand around in shock... disbelief.

From the other end of the street, a girl comes riding along on a bike... slowly taking in the entire scene. She pulls up to the kerb where a kid named David (eleven) is standing around.

It is Gretchen Ross.

GRETCHEN

Hi... what's going on here?

DAVID

Horrible accident. My neighbour... he got killed.

GRETCHEN

What happened?

DAVID

He got smooshed. By a jet engine.

She stares at the house, where paramedics wheel a body out of the front door.

GRETCHEN

What was his name?

DAVID

Donnie. Donnie Darko.

They stare at the front yard for a while. We see Elizabeth. We see Eddie, carrying Samantha... who is crying.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I feel bad for his family.

GRETCHEN

(long beat)

Yeah.

DAVID

Did you know him?

She stares at the family for several moments... and then shakes her head slowly as if trying to locate a memory that is slipping away.

GRETCHEN

No.

Rose, leaning against a tree while smoking a cigarette, notices them. She seems to recognise Gretchen... from somewhere in the vast reservoir of her memory.

She waves at her.

She waves back.

FADE OUT.

THE END